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# *Wyoming Civilian Defense in World War II*

By

T. A. LARSON\*

## **Introduction**

On October 26, 1951, every county in Wyoming was represented at a meeting in Casper at which, according to the United Press, "More than 55 leaders in civil defense . . . put the finishing touches to a concrete, integrated defense plan for the state."

Was history repeating itself? There had been a civilian defense organization in World War II. Men who were in key positions during World War II were present at Casper in 1951 to instill the confidence that comes from experienced leadership. Governor Frank A. Barrett, who was in Congress during World War II, was present in Casper as keynote speaker. Brig. Gen. R. L. Esmay, who had been executive vice chairman of the State Defense Council in World War II, was also present at the Casper meeting as state civil defense director.

The story of Wyoming's World War II experience in civil defense is here set down for the record and for the light it may cast on present-day problems. The material is drawn from a chapter from Dr. Larson's forthcoming book on **The History of Wyoming in World War II.**

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Civilian defense in 1952 is strictly concerned with protective services—at least so far. This was not the case ten years ago. In World War II the national Civilian Defense organization, which was set up by an executive order on May 20, 1941, spread its wings over a numerous brood of activities by virtue of the broad instructions it received from President Roosevelt. The Office of Civilian Defense was to provide for federal-state-local cooperation in civilian protection and also to facilitate the participation of all persons in war programs. Rather than set up a new agency for each new war program, the federal government turned it over to the OCD. Mr. Average Citizen, if he took "civilian defense" literally, was confused by the catch-all tendencies of the OCD. In time the division of Civilian Defense activities into "protective services" on the one

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hand, and "war services" or "home and health services" on the other, brought some semblance of order to the chaos.

This article is concerned with the protective services, leaving the numerous war services, or home and health services, for treatment elsewhere.

The first civilian defense activity in Wyoming resulting from concern over the gathering war clouds was the establishment of a State Guard in 1941. The mobilization of Wyoming's National Guard in September 1940 and February 1941 made it desirable to organize another unit to take over civil protection functions. Under authority of Congress the Wyoming Legislature in February 1941 provided for a State Defense Council, which was to set up a State Guard under the command of Col. R. L. Esmay, Adjutant General. The legislature voted \$200,000 for defense purposes, but Governor Nels H. Smith cut the appropriation to \$75,000, of which \$25,000 was to go for the State Guard and \$50,000 for emergency use.

Governor Smith named the first three members of the State Defense Council on March 26, 1941. From time to time he added other members. The council had its first meeting in Cheyenne April 29-30, 1941, with eleven members present: Dr. John D. Clark of Cheyenne, Harvey Cottrell of Kemmerer, James Davis of Rock Springs, Col. R. L. Esmay, State Adjutant General, Col. Goelet Gallatin of Big Horn, Dr. C. W. Jeffrey of Rawlins, H. Glen Kinsley of Sheridan, Leroy Laird of Worland, R. E. MacLeod of Torrington, Warren Richardson of Cheyenne and Edwin J. Zoble of Casper. Col. Gallatin, a reserve officer in the field artillery, was elected chairman and Col. Esmay, secretary. Almost immediately Col. Esmay assumed the responsibilities of executive vice chairman.

The State Defense Council grew until it had 18 members in September 1942. Two of the members named above, John D. Clark and Harvey Cottrell, had dropped out, but nine others had been added: Charles J. Hughes, Cheyenne; Dr. M. C. Keith, State Board of Health, Cheyenne; George O. Houser, Department of Commerce and Industry, Cheyenne; Harry Keller, A. F. of L., Cheyenne; Malcolm Condie, C.I.O., Rock Springs; Sam Hoover, State Board of Welfare, Cheyenne; Miss Esther L. Anderson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Cheyenne; and Ernest F. Shaw, executive secretary of the Council, Cheyenne.

In July 1943 Edwin J. Zoble became chairman, replacing Col. Gallatin who had resigned because of illness. Mr. Zoble was assisted by Col. Esmay, executive vice chairman, and George O. Houser, executive secretary. Three other

members—Charles J. Hughes, Warren Richardson and R. E. MacLeod—rounded out a six-man executive committee.

The Council's Biennial Report for 1943-44 listed the following 18 members: Ed Zoble, chairman, Col. R. L. Esmay, executive vice chairman, George Houser, executive secretary, E. E. Davis, Dr. C. W. Jeffrey, H. Glen Kinsley, Leroy Laird, R. E. MacLeod, Warren Richardson, Charles J. Hughes, Harry Keller, Malcolm Condie, Sam Hoover, Miss Esther L. Anderson, C. C. Averill of Laramie, W. F. Wilkerson of Casper, E. T. Storey of Cheyenne, and G. M. Anderson of Cheyenne.

The first task of the State Defense Council was to lay plans in June 1941 for a State Guard of 488 enlisted men and 52 officers, to be divided into a headquarters troop in Cheyenne and four cavalry squadrons (two troops in each) with headquarters in Sheridan, Casper, Rock Springs and Torrington.

Twelve communities were to contribute to the nine troops. Volunteers between the ages of 16 and 60 were to be enrolled. In July 1941 a State Guard budget of \$49,500 for two years was approved, which meant that the emergency fund in the original appropriation would have to be tapped.

In the meantime the State Defense Council had proceeded with the nomination of members for county defense councils to work in collaboration with the State Council. In June 1941 Governor Smith announced the appointment of about 200 members to the county councils. Men who served as county chairmen at one time or another thereafter included: Albany county, J. H. "Bud" Coulthard, Laramie; Big Horn county, A. Verne Patterson of Greybull and Dr. M. B. Walker of Basin; Campbell county, Dr. Ed. S. Werntz of Gillette; Carbon county, H. A. McKay, Rawlins; Converse county, R. S. Anthony and T. Lee Reno, Douglas; Crook county, Lee A. McWethy and C. D. Roberts, Sundance; Fremont county, E. E. Davis, Riverton, and Arthur L. Bettis, Lander (Fremont county had two "county" councils); Goshen county, E. B. Cope, Torrington; Hot Springs county, M. Glen Maret, Thermopolis; Johnson county, Geo. A. Heilman, Buffalo; Laramie county, Rudolph Hofmann, Cheyenne; Lincoln county, Tom Hall, Frontier, and George Johnson, Kemmerer; Natrona county, Judge Bryant S. Cromer, Casper; Niobrara county, E. Floyd Deuel and Dr. Walter E. Reckling, both of Lusk; Park county, Monte Jones and Milward Simpson, Cody; Platte county, W. B. Penman and Arther Rugg, Wheatland; Sheridan county, Louis J. O'Marr and William H. Harrison, both of Sheridan; Sublette county, Harry Klein and G. W. Wise, both of Pine-

dale; Sweetwater county, Claude Elias of Rock Springs; Teton county, Dudley Hayden and Homer Richards, both of Jackson; Uinta county, Wilber J. Watts, Evanston; Washakie county, J. D. Algier, Worland; Weston county, Ralph Olinger and E. E. Wakeman, both of Newcastle; Yellowstone Park, Edmund B. Rogers, Yellowstone Park. Counting the two councils for Fremont county and the one for Yellowstone Park, there were 25 "county" councils in the state.

The first duty of the county councils was to consider volunteers for the State Guard. Gradually the troops were built up, until at the outbreak of war Lieut. Col. Gerald Boyer, general executive officer, was able to report that the Guard organization was complete with 411 enlisted men and 52 officers. The training of seven troops had progressed to the point where rifles, ammunition and supplementary equipment had been issued. As it had been planned, there were nine troops distributed in 12 communities: Cheyenne, Worland, Lovell, Sheridan, Casper, Riverton, Lusk, Torrington, Laramie, Rock Springs, Kemmerer and Evanston.

The State Guard, equipped with special uniforms, drilled once a week without pay. On December 1, 1941, when alerted by Col. Esmay, who took seriously the warnings from Washington, the Guard began drilling twice a week. After our declaration of war, drill was stepped up to three times a week. "That may shatter some bridge games—but it will protect our bridges," said the **Sheridan Press**. At the end of December 1941 the Guard was back on a one-drill-a-week basis.

Right after Pearl Harbor Governor Smith urged the recruitment of a second state guard, but this was not done. Instead, after the temporary excitement of December 1941, the number of enlisted Guardsmen declined. In February 1942 there were 390 enlisted men and 51 officers. At the end of the war there were 271 enlisted men and 70 officers.<sup>1</sup> More than 200 of the men who left the Guard did so to enter the armed forces of the United States.

Except for some forest fighting duty, the Wyoming State Guardsmen were never called out for any emergency, but they drilled throughout the war with remarkable diligence. Adjutant General R. L. Esmay reported to Governor Lester C. Hunt in December 1945 that the Guard's four-year drill attendance average was 79.11%. Considering that they received no pay, the Adjutant General wrote to the Governor: "I think this is almost an unbelievable record of patriotic loyalty."<sup>2</sup> He explained that National Guardsmen

1. Governor Hunt's files: State Guard.

2. *Ibid.*

before the war received one day's pay for an hour and a half of drill, and were considered Satisfactory if they achieved 60% drill attendance. Subsequently, after the State Guard was deactivated, Governor Hunt wrote to all of the State Guard officers October 28, 1946, expressing appreciation for their patriotic services:

\*\*\* Adequate recognition cannot be given your service only because your duties were best performed by being ready for service and not through the necessities of active mobilization.

Working against a great many handicaps you established a high degree of proficiency, loyalty, and dependability. This accomplishment in itself gave our State a sense of preparedness to meet any emergency, which no doubt exercised a very important influence in maintaining our internal security and tranquillity through the war years.

We are grateful for having among our citizens men willing to sacrifice so much in the public service.\*\*\*3

The State Guard was an important cog in Wyoming's civilian defense machine in World War II, but by itself it would have been quite inadequate in a serious emergency such as the bombing of Cheyenne or Casper. British experience before Pearl Harbor indicated that there was in wartime an important place for numerous civilian auxiliaries for the normal protective forces. The yeoman service of British civilians in fighting fires, saving lives and reducing suffering during the 1940-41 blitzes had been well publicized, and was known to most Americans. It was realized that modern total war might well bring to a community far behind the lines such disaster that professional firemen, policemen, doctors, nurses and Red Cross workers would need the cooperation of numerous volunteers. To make these volunteers effective required organization and training.

The national OCD had been in existence since May 1941, but it was only a planning and coordinating body without any local authority. It could only suggest action, and month after month passed without much action in many states, including Wyoming. There had been thinking and talking about organizing civilian defense workers, other than those in the State Guard, but December 7, 1941, "the day that will live in infamy," found Wyoming with only the skeleton force represented by the State Defense Council and the county councils. Pearl Harbor brought feverish activity.

The State Defense Council in pre-war days had drawn up a list of vital facilities—railroads, refineries, oil fields, dams, gas companies, airports, key highway bridges, and

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3. Ibid.

others—and, in cooperation with the FBI, the highway patrol, county sheriffs, local police and company officials, plans had been made for guarding these facilities against sabotage. These plans were put into effect immediately. Local defense councils were ready to cooperate in this but did not have the primary responsibility.

The State Defense Council met in emergency session in Cheyenne December 12-13, 1941. The Council seriously considered, but decided against, starting a campaign to raise a civilian defense fund through voluntary subscriptions. Before the emergency meeting broke up, the Council had embarked upon a ten-point program:<sup>4</sup>

1. Registration of civilians willing to volunteer for civilian defense work . . . . Each county defense council will make plans for conducting the registration.
2. Registration soon of all private pilots and private airplanes in Wyoming to form a civilian air patrol.
3. Complete housing inventory to determine what facilities will be available in case widespread coastal evacuations are ordered.
4. Formation of air raid warning system, including distribution to all citizens of information on what to do during a raid.
5. Organization of emergency, and formation of a comprehensive, health and nutritional program.
6. Organization of a medical service for the state guard.
7. Training and organization of amateur radio operators to work with the state guard and with civilian defense units.
8. Formation of fire districts to protect forests and ranges from fires.
9. Establishment of training classes in blacksmithing and farm machinery repair work. . . .
10. Active participation by local defense councils in war work . . . aiding drives. . . .

In this program appears the twofold nature of civilian defense activity: the "protective services" and the "war services" or "home and health services." The protective services received major attention at the beginning of the war.

The first item in the State Defense Council's ten-point program was the registration of volunteer defense workers. This began in Wheatland December 27, and in some other communities in January and February, but in some communities it took many months to get started. Even so, the State Council announced in April 1942 that 25,000 volunteers had been enrolled, including 4,547 in Cheyenne, 3,019 in Sheridan and 2,739 in Rock Springs. The 25,000 figure for April 1942 appears to have been an estimate, for later reports showed only 17,456 volunteers registered in October 1942 and 19,352 in February 1943. At any rate, thousands of men and women flocked to the registration stations and enrolled for the openings offered. With some exceptions,

4. *Wyoming Eagle*, 16 December 1941.

the men generally were assigned to the protective services and the women to the home and health services.

Lingle reported registrants of ages ranging from 16 to 82. Sheridan reported the registration of Jacob Markert, 73, a veteran who had served with the First Cavalry against the Sioux in 1890. William S. Oliver, 75, was the first volunteer in Washakie county. Officials of Ranchester (population 189) boasted that their community was the first incorporated town in the United States to sign up 100 per cent for civilian defense. Many communities at some distance from county councils formed their own organizations until there were 75 councils in the state.

Defense corps assignments in the first year included: 332 staff, 2,914 air raid wardens, 610 auxiliary firemen, 640 auxiliary police, 586 decontamination, 187 demolition and clearance, 342 drivers, 475 emergency food and housing, 782 emergency medical, 808 fire watchers, 559 messengers, 197 nurses aides, 292 rescue squads, 195 road repair, and 285 utility repair.

Financing county and community council activity was a local problem. Eventually the proceeds from sale of donated scrap and waste paper gave some councils more money than they could spend, but at the outset money was scarce. The B. and P. W. paid for printing the Casper registration forms. Ernest F. Shaw, state executive secretary, attributed the early success of Sweetwater county's civil defense organization to the fact that Rock Springs and Sweetwater county provided funds to pay for an office director.

While forms were being printed and the registration of volunteers was getting under way, some persons became impatient. Everyone in authority, from the President on down, was advising "Keep Calm," but some people could not help being disturbed by the full-page spreads in all the newspapers telling what to do in an air raid: "Keep Cool, Stay Home, Put Out Lights, Lie Down, Stay Away From Windows." And John Lear's syndicated column in the **Sheridan Press** December 19, 1941, advised people to decide which was the strongest room in the house, prepare it as a refuge, put a table in it, put a spare mattress under the table, equip the room with magazines and cards, and be ready to crawl under the table when the sirens sounded. Small wonder that some persons began looking around for more substantial shelter than the average small home could afford. A letter to the editor of the **Casper Tribune-Herald** proposed that instead of thinking about parking meters the city should install an air raid shelter in the center of town. Persons in several communities investigated caves and mine

shafts. Dr. Reckling, CD director at Lusk, announced that an abandoned mine was to be prepared as a bomb shelter. Big Horn county officials and business men from Greybull, Basin and Lovell explored two natural caves north of Greybull. Postal employees in Sheridan received local defense council approval for detailed plans they had drawn up for evacuating the city in case of need.

With everyone being urged to register as air raid wardens, and so on, skeptics restrained their comments. The **Wyoming Eagle** stated editorially January 9, 1942: "There are a few who scoff at the suggestion of such dangers, but their number is growing fewer as the days go by."

Most of the people were not sufficiently excited to begin looking for air raid shelters, nor even to prepare a room as suggested. After all, it would be just about as easy and safe to take refuge out on the prairie. Editor Linford of the **Laramie Republican-Boomerang** January 27, 1942, warned against the danger of carrying the defense program "beyond the realm of credulity." He advocated vigilance but thought that action on bomb shelters could well be postponed.

Although the great majority stopped short of looking for bomb shelters, there were those who deplored the delay. Witness Anne Casper, who complained in her **Casper Tribune-Herald** column February 4, 1942:

No civilian air raid drills. No blackout practice. No organized emergency measures have been rehearsed. No nothing, in fact, unless you count gathering paper and hoarding sugar. . . . we still haven't got the idea. This is war. Must we also be massacred before we begin to have a little organized training? Have we got to wait till lives are needlessly sacrificed before we at least begin to plan air raid shelters?

Despite a few pleas of this type, most people were not in a hurry, although when given a chance they registered for defense work. The **Wyoming Eagle** in April 1942 noted editorially that "Few people seem to sense the danger that hangs over every head." Publisher Tracy S. McCracken of the Cheyenne newspapers returned in June 1942 from a visit to the West Coast and reported that in Seattle he had seen balloon barrages surrounding shipyards and airplane factories, sandboxes on almost every street corner for extinguishing fire bombs, well marked air raid shelters and interceptor planes on the alert at every flying field. He observed that in Cheyenne "rightly or wrongly, our people have made but scantiest preparations against possible enemy air visitors."

A report of the State Council August 31, 1942, included unfavorable comments for some counties:<sup>5</sup>

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5. Governor Hunt's files: State Defense Council.

Big Horn—Much to be desired in this county . . . .

Carbon—Well behind most counties considering its size and important location along the Union Pacific.

Converse—Very little organization work here to date . . . .

Fremont—One of the unusual dull spots for home defense in the state.

Hot Springs—An active council but slow to get started.

Natrona—This is another county where it has been hard to get going, but where things are now happening.

Washakie—Much to be desired in Washakie county.

On the other hand, the report said that Sheridan county had "A very fine council," and spoke of Sweetwater county as "The most completely organized . . . in the State."

Ernest F. Shaw, executive secretary of the State Defense Council, advised members of the Council September 8, 1942, that Regional Headquarters had placed Wyoming first in home defense work among the nine states of the Seventh region, but, added the executive secretary, "we are only getting well started . . . . The fact that we stand at the top among nine states can not be so much a compliment to Wyoming, as an indictment of the other eight states."

While it is true that Wyoming preparations were far short of those along the East and West Coasts, a considerable number of the state's citizens did follow through with training courses as soon as they were set up. First aid courses were basic in most defense training, and they were started all over the state in December 1941 and January 1942. By 1944 some 9,117 Wyoming persons had received certificates. Policemen and firemen of Wyoming's principal cities were training volunteers to be their emergency auxiliaries. Rescue squads were learning first aid, fire fighting and defense against gas.

The national OCD entrusted the training of air raid wardens to the American Legion. George Storey, Legion department adjutant, after receiving training in a civilian protection school at Stanford University, directed a four-day school in Casper July 15-18, 1942, attended by 125 persons representing every county in the state. There were lectures on protection against gases, the use and care of gas masks, types and composition of incendiaries, and a lecture entitled "Air Raid Warden." Army officers, doctors, university professors, police and firemen shared in the training of county representatives who then returned to their communities to instruct the local wardens.

Up to this time the air raid wardens had not done very much. Cheyenne had 450 district, block and assistant block wardens who had received their preliminary instructions April 24. It was reported May 10 that fewer than one-third



of them had surveyed their blocks and turned in reports. On July 10 Cheyenne's organization reached the point of explaining new air raid alarm signals. On August 4 Chief Air Raid Warden Byron Hirst told the Cheyenne Central Labor Union that he "deplored the lack of interest shown by many men and women here—those who believe that an enemy raid will never reach Cheyenne." On August 8 the condition of Cheyenne's defense may be judged by a news story in the **Eagle**: "Of approximately 6,000 Cheyenneites who have received training or are now enrolled for training in the OCD's Red Cross first aid and other classes, a scant 150 have seen fit to place their names and other data on record for call by the local office in case of emergency." They had been urged, pleaded with and begged, it was reported, but they had not registered in the civilian defense office.

The Casper school for instructors of air raid wardens provided the spark needed for the rejuvenation of the defense program. The four-day school in July led to the institution of five-week courses (10 lessons) in many communities. Wheatland's course was started as soon as the instructors returned from Casper. The editor of the **Wheatland Times** observed: "While we do not anticipate an air raid in Wheatland, we have been reminded of our proximity to Cheyenne, Casper and the Sunrise mines, making it possible that our town might at least be used as a landmark, and we are to be prepared for anything." In Cheyenne nearly 800 persons completed the air raid defense course and received certificates September 17. It was claimed that Cheyenne was ahead of all other cities in the Rocky Mountain region. Some 600 Casper citizens received their certificates and arm bands October 27. Smaller groups received certificates in other communities.

Wyoming's air raid wardens had just completed their five-week course when they learned that professional oddsmakers in the insurance business were not much afraid of air raids. Insurance agents in Sheridan in November began promoting war damage insurance offered through private insurance companies by the federal War Damage Corporation. The rate for dwellings was only 10c per \$100 of insurance. In August the Casper school board had considered a proposal of the Casper underwriters association for the writing of bomb insurance for the school buildings, but decided to seek more information before making any decision. The school board members evidently did not think the matter very urgent.

Without any publicity Governor Smith set up an air raid warning communication system in July 1942. This was

done "at the practical demand of the Federal Government."<sup>6</sup> The air raid defense plan was outlined in General Orders No. 3, Headquarters, Central Defense Command, dated June 23, 1942, and forwarded to Governor Smith July 1, 1942, by the Commanding Officer of the Army Service Forces, Seventh Service Command, Omaha. A sub-area warning center was established and manned 24 hours a day in the Capitol Building. George O. Houser became sub-area controller. Calls were taken from the Area Warning Center in Omaha, to be relayed as desired to districts and sub-districts within the state. Many Wyoming cities and towns established control centers with elaborate panel boards. Casper and Rock Springs were praised in the State Defense Council's Biennial Report 1943-44 for being "among the outstanding control centers in the nation." Although the system was established primarily for air raid warning purposes, the Biennial Report stated that "its services were extended to include any emergency calling for fast and accurate communication to all parts of the State." This would indicate that the State Government found the system convenient, despite the absence of air raids.

On November 1, 1943, the operation period of the Seventh Area Warning Center, and its various subsidiaries, was reduced from full time to only four hours a week—1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Central War Time each Wednesday. The Commanding Officer of the Seventh Service Command, Omaha, wrote to Governor Smith that under present conditions it was "possible to assume a certain amount of calculated risk," but this "should be accomplished with the minimum of publicity."<sup>7</sup> Thus after the maintenance of the communication system on a round-the-clock basis for 16 months it was placed on an "alert status" and operated only four hours a week.

In the meantime Wyoming had had two statewide black-out tests to see how well air raid wardens in particular, and the people in general, would respond. The first test, which took place December 14, 1942, was well advertised for a month ahead of time. Only railroads and other vital war industries were exempt. Otherwise everyone should extinguish all lights at 9 p.m. on signal and maintain the blackout for 20 minutes, when the all-clear signal would be given. The test was to apply to rural as well as urban areas, and was to extend over all nine states of the Seventh Service

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6. Governor Hunt's files: State Defense Council, Biennial Report 1943-44.

7. *Ibid.*

Command. It was the largest area in the country to be blacked out at one time, 712,000 square miles.

In preparation for the blackout the Laramie city council passed an ordinance designating the Albany county defense council as the city's official supervising agency for civilian defense. The ordinance provided for a fine not exceeding \$100 or imprisonment in the city or county jail not exceeding three months to violators. The editor of the **Laramie Republican-Boomerang** warned: "Even though you don't hear the whistles, remember it's lights out from 9 to 9:20 tonight; no telephone calls, no jaunts out on to the street to see how the blackout is coming."

To dramatize the blackout, the **Wyoming State Tribune** printed its December 14 front page with white letters on a black background. The only lights to be permitted in Cheyenne were those in the United Air Lines maintenance shops, the modification center and the Union Pacific shops.

When all reports were in on this well publicized blackout of December 14, 1942, Col. Esmay, executive vice chairman of the State Defense Council, stated that he was much gratified with the response. To be sure, he did not expect perfection. In Cheyenne the doors of two establishments had to be broken into to turn out lights—in accordance with city ordinance. In Laramie four blackout violators were given suspended \$10 fines by Judge Coolican in police court. The Judge recognized that the violations were not intentional, and preferred not to assess the maximum penalty—\$100 fine or three months in jail. Absentmindedly some of the guilty individuals had left night lights burning in their stores, and were not on hand to turn them off when the warning sounded. Apprehended also was a minister who had failed to extinguish a small light which burned constantly to illuminate a stained glass window in his Church.

In Lingle the wardens quickly found and reminded all who had failed to respond to the signal. Then after the "all clear" the Lingle firemen served a lunch at the fire hall, followed by dancing with music by the high school orchestra. It was Monday night, an unusual night for a dance, but the "all clear" after the state's first blackout called for some kind of celebration. Lander, too, celebrated the "all clear"—with coffee and doughnuts.

The second statewide blackout was a "semi-surprise" test on May 4, 1943. It was well advertised that the test would occur the first week in May. The exact time was not announced in advance, but many civilian defense officials were forewarned. George O. Houser, secretary of the State Defense Council, reported two days later that the test was "generally successful." The evidence indicates that this

second blackout was not as successful as the first one. In Laramie seven persons were hauled into police court for neglecting to turn off their lights.

Somehow the word did not get to Newcastle. On the night of the blackout its chief air raid warden, M. L. Hays, impatiently called the **Wyoming Eagle** in Cheyenne to report that although he understood that a blackout had been scheduled, no warning signal had been received, and all lights continued to burn. The next day the disgruntled warden declared "the city of Newcastle could have been bombed to hell last night."

Cheyenne had enough confusion without any calls from Newcastle. Fort Warren began its test at 9:10, twenty minutes ahead of Cheyenne. Cheyenne's siren at 9:30 failed to achieve a complete blackout. The **Eagle** reported: "The lights of approximately a dozen business houses glared during the first half of the 20-minute test. Others, including the high school, either were tardy or failed to extinguish their lights." City air raid warden Byron Hirst explained later that lights were permitted to burn rather than damage property, but there would be no hesitation in case of an actual raid. Since two doors had been forced in the earlier raid, it appears that a more lenient attitude prevailed in the second test.

In Casper the second test was far from satisfactory. At a meeting of the defense corps at the control headquarters a week after the test it was brought out that many persons had failed to heed the warning. In extenuation it was explained that many violations were due to a confusion of signals and to the fact that the signals were not heard in all parts of town. Despite these legitimate excuses there was a feeling that many citizens had taken the matter much too lightly. The **Casper Tribune-Herald** reported that at the post mortem meeting "It was emphasized that the local Defense corps does not have these tests for the fun of it," and "The possibility that all willful and malicious violators of the city's blackout ordinance will be cited to appear in court after future blackout tests was indicated."

Wheatland also had trouble in this second statewide blackout. The **Wheatland Times** said: "A blackout held Tuesday evening was not successful because citizens confused the second signal with the all-clear and turned on their lights."

Besides observing, after a fashion, the two statewide blackouts, various communities had their own tests. The first recorded was at Fort Mackenzie December 19, 1941. The **Sheridan Press** explained that it was "to accustom the 500 patients to the procedure." Sam Tate earned the dis-

tion of being the state's first home-front casualty when he ran into a wall in the V. A. office and injured his nose.

Cheyenne had a surprise test July 8, 1943. The city had done fairly well in December 1942 with the aid of much publicity extending over a whole month, and specifying the exact time when the warning would come. The city had done considerably worse in its second test, the "semi-surprise" one in May 1943. The third test, which was supposed to be a real surprise, "left civilian defense officials far from satisfied," according to the **Wyoming State Tribune**. Reva Hurwitz elaborated on the shortcomings in the **Eagle**:

Consider yourself bombed to death last night!

Cheyenne's first surprise blackout under the newly adopted air raid signals proved unsuccessful, marked by confusion and discrepancies.

Despite wide-spread publicity by newspapers and instructions by some air raid wardens a great part of the general public seemed ignorant or misinformed about the signals. And in some instances wardens themselves seemed confused and unable to cope with their duties.

The caution period, marked by the first signal, was almost generally mistaken for the blackout, and traffic was stopped, lights turned off, and many pedestrians found shelter. Most violations in the downtown district during this period were caused when storeowners on their way to turn off lights were erroneously stopped by wardens.

The next signal, notice of the actual "air raid" caused a blaze of lights—taken for the all-clear.

The evidence indicates that in the first month after Pearl Harbor many Wyoming people were afraid of air raids, but that after that, fear diminished rapidly. Nothing short of a few bombs could have revived the early alarm. Had bombs fallen anywhere on U. S. soil in 1942, protective measures would have received much more serious consideration. Most people conformed in a spirit of good fellowship when blackouts were announced, but there was enough skepticism expressed and enough downright delinquency to give ulcers to conscientious air raid wardens.

The Civilian Defense protective measures which have been considered so far were on the ground. Wyoming also had a form of air defense in the Civil Air Patrol. The CAP was organized nationally under LaGuardia's OCD on December 1, 1941. The plan was to set up an auxiliary force whose personnel would be drawn from private plane owners who were not eligible for service in the armed forces. They would furnish their own uniforms, pay their own personal expenses, and put their planes to use in various types of patrols.

Point two of the ten-point program announced by Wyoming's State Defense Council was "Registration soon of all

private pilots and private airplanes in Wyoming to form a civilian air patrol." Governor Nels H. Smith named W. D. Walker of Cheyenne wing commander of the state's Civil Air Patrol, which was classed as a forest and highway patrol unit. It was announced on February 26, 1942, that there were two squadrons in Cheyenne under Plains Airways flight instructors, and that there would be a squadron at Laramie with a flight group under it at Rock Springs, and another squadron at Sheridan with flight groups under it at Cody and Newcastle.

The Seventh Corps Area Commander of the CAP stated at the outset that the relatively few pilots and planes available in Wyoming and the tremendous territory to be covered would limit the activity considerably.<sup>8</sup> Wyoming's civilian pilots had no chance to participate in the important antisubmarine patrol work which was performed by CAP pilots along the Coasts. Nor did Wyoming CAP pilots tow sleeve targets for gunnery practice as some civilian pilots did in other parts of the country. Wyoming's civilian pilots did, however, participate in an Airplane Crash Service. This was something new that was started outside the official CAP organization by some of Wyoming's local defense councils,<sup>9</sup> but it was encouraged and supplemented by the state CAP organization, and spread to other states.

Nationally the CAP was taken from the OCD and placed under the War Department on April 29, 1943. Meanwhile, with little work to do, interest had flagged in Wyoming. The state was the only one in the Union without a wing of the CAP in July 1944, although there was a squadron at Cheyenne. In order to further the cadet recruitment program, reorganization work commenced in 1944, and squadrons were formed in Casper in July and in Rock Springs in November. There were two groups in each squadron, a senior group of men and women with basic aviation education, and the cadets of ages 15-18 who received basic ground training. Thus assistance in an educational program sponsored by the U. S. Army Air Corps became the principal work of the reorganized CAP.

Another phase of the volunteer protective services was that of the Forest Fire Fighters, many of whom received specialized training. J. S. Veeder of the Forest Service, who was stationed at Laramie, recruited 7,000 persons from every county, and when Veeder was transferred to Texas, C. C. Averill took charge of the program. The State De-

8. **Wyoming State Tribune**, 26 February 1942.

9. Governor Hunt's files: State Defense Council Biennial Report 1943-44.

partment of Education assisted by providing instructors to help train men.

The various training programs for the OCD protective services included men, women and children. Grade school and high school students were taught air raid protection, and high school boys were given forest fighter training in some communities. The main feature of a Boy Scout court of honor in Casper in March 1942 was a blackout first aid demonstration by some of the Scouts.

The block leader plan was widely used for organizing protective activities. Milward Simpson who became head of the Park county defense council in November 1942 was proud of the cooperation he got from his zone and block leaders. He wrote November 30, 1943: "I have seen my zone and block leaders in Powell, Meeteetse and Cody work long and faithfully and enthusiastically without complaint, to put Park county over the top in every enterprise referred to OCD."<sup>10</sup> And again in July 1944 he wrote: "I have had the finest zone and block leader set-ups that I ever saw."

Wyoming's thousands of air raid wardens had little cause for worry in the summer of 1943. A potential threat from the Aleutians had been eliminated when U. S. troops cleaned the Japs out of Attu Island in May. The Allies were bombing German cities heavily and attacking various targets in the Far East, while enemy operations over the United Kingdom were diminishing. Wyoming's State Defense Council met in Casper in the middle of July 1943, with nearly every county council represented. Governor Hunt addressed the group and warned that "at best we are in for a long war." Public interest in civil defense, he said, is geared to day by day news. When the news is good interest wanes. "Our present concern is that in many places we are in the latter state of mind."

The Regional Director of OCD in Omaha wrote to Governor Hunt August 20, 1943, and directed attention to the effective work done by Civilian Defense personnel in Nebraska on the occasion of an ammunition fire, and again when six practice bombs were dropped accidentally on the little town of Tarnov, Nebraska. "Your State May Be Next!" warned the Director. As it turned out, Wyoming never had an opportunity to apply protective measures, except for putting out a few forest fires that were not War-caused. Interest in protective measures declined despite an occasional warning such as was sounded at a Natrona county protective staff meeting December 8, 1943, when a

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10. Governor Hunt's files: copy of letter to H. M. Rollins in OPA file.

speaker declared that "As long as we are at war no one can positively say that nothing will happen here." The **Wyoming Eagle** a week later commented that the work of air raid wardens "is done." "It is hardly possible that the war could take such an unfavorable turn that more blackouts in the Rocky Mountain area would be in order." The **Eagle** reflected Wyoming public opinion in this matter very accurately. Much of the state's civilian defense interest had shifted from the protective services to the home and health services. The 1943-44 Biennial Report of the State Defense Council stated that "With the OCD program set up on an over-all nationwide basis there were many occasions when the State office was called upon to function in a negative manner, preventing introduction into the State of programs and activities valueless in this area because of our geographic location."

After Canada dropped part of her civilian defense program early in 1944 a powerful movement developed to cut the U. S. civilian defense program. There was a reduction in personnel in both national and regional offices, but Gov. Hunt and others in Wyoming and elsewhere thought that still further cuts were in order.

To most people, including some who served on defense councils, the boundaries of the OCD authority were never clear. The national and regional offices were supposed to have purely advisory functions, but their advice carried great weight at the beginning of the war. Before long their influence diminished perceptibly. Conceivably the OCD could have been tremendously powerful if some of its planners had had their way. They would have had all programs from the federal government channeled through the state executives and defense council to the local community. Governors and state defense councils were not always eager to undertake the coordination of the many and changing federal programs, and various federal agencies preferred to handle their own programs directly. A statement in Governor Hunt's files written by a Salt Lake City OCD official in December 1943 declared: "I believe that it must be brought strongly to the attention of the heads of the various war agencies in Washington that it is not only a matter of appropriate policy to instruct regional and state chiefs to work with and through state defense councils but also in their own interest to do so. Then the State (which is the Defense Council) must establish a proper working relationship with the agencies."<sup>11</sup> Some governors would not equate the Defense Council with the State. Governor

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11. Governor Hunt's files: State Defense Council.



Hunt did not care to insist that the State Defense Council be made the reservoir or funneling agency through which should pass all the diverse programs of the WPB (Salvage and Conservation programs), Treasury Department (War Savings), OPA (Price Control and Rationing), War Manpower Commission and U. S. Employment Service (Manpower Recruitment), WFA and USDA (Food Production and Conservation and Nutrition), FSA, Office of Community War Services (Child Care, Recreation, Social Protection), FHA, War Housing Center (Housing), ODT (Transportation), Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard (Recruiting), Federal Rehabilitation Agency (Re-employment and rehabilitation of servicemen), Office of War Information (Security of Military Information), and so on.

Some such funneling through the State Defense Council saved time and money, as was the case with the early rationing program when something had to be done in a hurry, but it seems likely that the State Defense Council would have been inundated if all of the expanded national war programs had descended upon it. Many reams of paper piled up on county council desks, the way it was.

In reply to an inquiry from an Illinois Congressman, Governor Hunt wrote March 6, 1944: "I am of the opinion that the Office of Civilian Defense served its purpose very admirably but that the need for the set-up no longer exists." A month later the Governor, in reply to a query, told the Acting Regional Director of the OCD that while the Wyoming State Council had been very effective and efficient, other departments especially set up were "sufficient to handle the respective drives and war effort activities."

Some salaried OCD officials outside of Wyoming insisted on the importance of retaining the organization. The national director in January 1944 informed Governor Hunt that in some states the Governors had asked Defense Councils to undertake the responsibility for planning and coordinating programs of services to veterans. He recommended the appointment of a Defense Council committee on such services. A West Coast OCD official sent Governor Hunt a copy of a speech which included the statement "Permit me to suggest nine reasons why you would do well to safeguard and preserve the remarkably efficient Civilian Defense organization which you have created." Governor Hunt was not impressed. When a county chairman resigned in July 1944, the Governor chose not to appoint a successor.

On October 24, 1944, when the Wyoming State Council sent letters to all county councils asking for their frank opinion on what should be done with OCD in the state,

only one chairman went so far as to say that it should be discontinued. All others thought that a skeleton organization should be retained at the state level. Most of the councils felt that if the occasion arose they could start functioning on a moment's notice in a very efficient manner.<sup>12</sup>

The **Wyoming State Journal** (Lander) December 7, 1944, suggested editorially that "The Job Is Done—Let's Disband." The **Journal** felt that there would be a saving in manpower and expense if the OCD were disbanded, and suggested that the head of the "now almost defunct Civilian Defense board in Lander" call a meeting to survey the need and consider the desirability of dissolving.

The State Council met in December 1944 and decided to continue the CD programs after VE day until the defeat of Japan, subject to orders from higher authority. On May 2, 1945, President Truman abolished the OCD and provided that its liquidation should be completed by June 30. Thus the great Civilian Defense organization, which by February 1943 had enrolled 19,352 of Wyoming's citizens and had touched the lives of everyone, soon came to be regarded as definitely superfluous by many, but it lingered on until 1945.

One reason why the OCD organization lingered as long as it did may have been the Japanese paper balloon scare. Late in the war quite a number of paper balloons bearing Japanese markings and equipped with small bombs came to earth at widely scattered points in the United States and Canada. They caused a few small fires, and a few persons who tampered with unexploded bombs were killed. The first public notice taken of these balloons in Wyoming was on December 19, 1944, when the **Laramie Republican-Boomerang** and the **Wyoming State Tribune**, and perhaps other papers, carried an Associated Press story filed at Kalispell, Montana, reporting that "A huge paper balloon, bearing Japanese ideographs and armed with an incendiary bomb . . . has been found 17 miles southwest of Kalispell, the Federal Bureau of Investigation said last night." The news, although known to everyone in Kalispell, had been withheld since the discovery on December 12. The A. P. story described the balloon as 33½ feet in diameter, and armed with a six-inch bomb. A 70-foot fuse had sputtered out without causing any damage.

After this story was released, the censorship curtain was lowered. On May 14, 1945, the Commanding Officer of the Seventh Service Command, Omaha, wrote to Governor Hunt that the War Department had directed that a word-

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12. Governor Hunt's files: State Defense Council.

of-mouth campaign be initiated to acquaint the public with the danger from unexploded bombs brought to the U. S. by Japanese balloons.<sup>13</sup> "As you know," wrote the General, "[the bombs] have been arriving in this country for some time. A complete press and radio blackout concerning this matter is now in effect to keep Japs from securing any information . . . ." The General sent Lieut. Col. Jesse E. Marshall to discuss the matter with the Governor. Marshall was charged with the Army responsibility for the word-of-mouth campaign in Wyoming. Luncheon clubs, veterans organizations, state officials, school assemblies, Boy Scouts and other groups were to be told about the danger from the balloons.

Editor Linford of the **Laramie Republican-Boomerang** thought that this was all pretty silly, and refused to abide by the censorship. On May 23, 1945, he published an editorial:

A word-of-mouth campaign is under way throughout this part of the country, warning residents against tampering with Japanese bomb balloons or fragments thereof which may fall in the area. Information is being told verbally which censorship forbids the newspapers to publish.

Presumably the censorship theory is that the Jap spies can read but can't hear.

A week later in an Associated Press article from Washington, D. C., the Chief of the U. S. Forest Service gave details about the balloons. The article related that the Army and Navy had announced that some of the balloons had landed in the western part of the country but had caused no property damage.

After the Japanese surrender much information that had been covered up during the war was revealed. The **Cody Enterprise** on August 22, 1945, released an "unofficial" account of bomb incidents in Wyoming. There had been no reports of damage to property or injury to persons in Wyoming. The first incident had been near Thermopolis on the night of December 6, 1944. Persons near a coal mine 15 miles west of Thermopolis reported seeing what they took to be flares and a parachutist, and heard an explosion. In nearby Owl Creek valley a resident heard explosions and saw a fire on a mountain. On December 15, 1944, Sheriff Kem Moyer of Thermopolis reported that the explosion of a strange type of bomb had been verified. One of the balloons was sighted January 15, 1945, floating near the Cody refinery, but a three-hour search by Sheriff Frank Blackburn failed to locate any trace of it. Kenneth Adkins sighted a balloon about 25 miles southwest of Newcastle on

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13. Governor Hunt's files: Seventh Service Command.

February 8. Adkins followed the balloon in a pickup truck, captured it, and brought it to Newcastle, where it was placed under guard in the state armory. Henry Barrows and several others sighted a balloon near Ralston on February 22. When the balloon burst, a bomb described as three to four inches in diameter and 16 to 18 inches long fell to the ground and backfired without breaking its steel case. Most of the balloon reports in Wyoming were from the northern third of the State, although two were reported found near Cheyenne early in the summer.

Japanese staff officers interviewed after the war told their side of the story. The use of the bomb-laden paper balloons was tried in retaliation for the Doolittle raid on Tokyo April 18, 1942. After more than two years of experimentation some 9,000 balloons were launched from three sites near Tokyo at a cost of more than \$2,000,000.<sup>14</sup> The project was abandoned as a failure on April 20, 1945, because there was no evidence of success. Japanese officers said that they had heard of only one landing in America. They had heard of the discovery of an unexploded bomb in Wyoming. They had monitored the Chungking radio, hoping for further reports, but had heard nothing. The Japanese officers explained that the project had been designed to "create confusion" by starting forest fires and frightening civilians. They said that the bombs weighed 30 pounds or less, and were set to explode 40 to 50 hours after launching. It was calculated that the prevailing westerly winds would deliver the balloons and bombs to America in that time. Presumably many of the bombs descended in the Pacific, but at least one traveled as far east as Maryland.

If the project had been tried in the early fall instead of the months of November-April, there might have been greater damage to forests, and civilian defense volunteers might have had their hands full trying to hold down the damage. The technical failures and delivery at the wrong season saved the Wyoming civilian defense force, and similar forces in other states, from what might have been a real baptism of fire. If all-out war should come again with a Pacific power, Wyoming may be visited again by paper balloons, but this time they might deliver potent atomic, biological and chemical weapons in comparison with which the Japanese bombs of 1945 were harmless toys. For this and other reasons the skepticism and carnival spirit associated with Wyoming's Civilian Defense in World War II may have to be discarded.

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14. *Casper Tribune-Herald*, A. P. article, Oct. 2, 1945.

# *The Days of the Open Range*

By

RICHARD BRACKENBURY\*

Where are the lads who rode with me  
When like the wind, the range was free,  
With no barbed wire, not a strand  
From Canada's line to the Rio Grande?

We swept the hills and the western plain,  
As storm clouds sweep the land with rain.  
Our number great beyond belief,  
We branded calves, and gathered beef.

We rode in early dawn of light  
And held the cattle through the night.  
In every weather weeks around  
Our beds . . . unrolled . . . lay on the ground.

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Age brings with fleeting years a change  
And we who rode the open range,  
Young, light-hearted, brave and gay,  
Must like the bison pass away.

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\*Richard Brackenbury arrived in the United States from England in 1880 at the age of sixteen. He came to act as an interpreter for an Italian Colony which was abandoned while in the planning stage.

After spending three years in Kansas he and a school friend in 1884 assembled a covered wagon, a pair of mares, a bird dog, a gun, bedding and pots and pans and drove to Wyoming. He first worked at supplying hay to stage stations north of Fort Fetterman. That winter while hunting and trapping he came to the banks of the Medicine Bow River where he homesteaded land, eventually acquiring over four miles of the river valley where he raised cattle, sheep and brood mares.

In 1893 he married an English girl. In 1897 he moved with his family to Denver where he originated a sheep market by starting a sheep commission business. He also developed a ranch on the Mesa Mayo range in southern Colorado, which became the largest sheep ranch in the state. Here he ran two to three thousand cattle as well. In 1930 he and his wife retired to La Jolla, California, where he is often called the Philosopher Poet.

In the July 1951 issue of *The Colorado Magazine* appeared an article "Katherine Brackenbury's Letters to Her Mother" as compiled by Richard Brackenbury. The letters are of special interest to Wyoming since they deal with the ranching days on the Medicine Bow in 1893-95.

# *Levancia Bent's Diary of a Sheep Drive, Evanston, Wyoming, to Kearney, Nebraska, 1882*

Edited by

GEORGE SQUIRES HERRINGTON\*

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

The settlement of the great expanse extending across the western portion of the Great Plains area to the Pacific Coast is largely a story of the trapper, soldier, miner, cowboy, and sheep herder.

After the Civil War and particularly after the completion of the first transcontinental railroad at Promontory Point, Utah, in 1869, sheep men played an important role in helping to establish an economic foundation for the settlement of this vast region. During three decades, ending with the closing of the sheep trails about 1900, the trailing of sheep, especially from the West and South, changed the center of surplus wool production from the eastern farm belt to the Great Plains and mountain region.

The population of this area with sheep was primarily the work of individuals rather than that of organized interests.<sup>1</sup> One of those individuals was George Jackson Squires.<sup>2</sup> He trailed 4,000 sheep from Wyoming to Nebraska in 1881. The following year he trailed 8,000 head from Evanston, Wyoming, to Grand Island, Nebraska. At this time, in contrast to an earlier period, Wyoming was attracting flocks to its ranges as well as still providing a highway for sheep travel.

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\*George Squires Herrington, Associate Professor of the Social Sciences at Sacramento State College, Sacramento, California, was born May 11, 1909, at Aurora, Illinois. He has received degrees from Northern Illinois State Teachers College, Teachers College of Columbia University and Stanford University where he obtained his Ed. D. From 1947 to 1950 he was a member of the faculty of the University of Denver.

1. The editor has been aided in placing this diary of a sheep drive in its historical setting by reference to Edward N. Wentworth, *America's Sheep Trails*. Ames: The Iowa State College Press, 1948.

2. The editor's paternal great grandfather.

The excerpts from the diary kept by Miss Levancia Bent, George Squires' sister-in-law, concerns the experiences relating to this drive in 1882. Not many diaries of sheep trailing appear extant in the literature; this one may be unique in that it was written by a woman. The original manuscript describes a railroad trip by the party from Aurora, Illinois, to Salt Lake City, Utah, beginning on June 20, 1882, a visit in Salt Lake City from June 24 to July 6, a journey by the party in Brigham Young's family carriage to Evanston, Wyoming, from July 6 to July 11, an encampment on Bear River near Evanston from July 11 to July 20, and the sheep drive from Evanston to Kearney, Nebraska, from July 20 to October 26, including a short excursion by some of the party to Denver, Colorado, from September 12 to September 16. Although the portion of the diary relating to the sheep drive ends at Kearney, Nebraska, where the women board a train for home, the sheep were driven on to Grand Island, Nebraska, and wintered there.

The excerpts from the diary included here begin with the encampment on Bear River on July 11, 1882, during which time preparations which had been underway were still being made to trail the sheep to Grand Island. The editor has deleted some portions of the diary relating to the sheep drive that are largely personal in nature. An attempt has been made to identify individuals, places and events through the use of footnote citations and explanations.<sup>3</sup>

George Jackson Squires, the son of Asher Squires and Polly Priest, was born in Watertown, Jefferson County, New York, on December 5, 1828. He acquired his early education in the district schools of Watertown. When 18 years of age, he spent one winter in Michigan visiting his Grandfather Priest. While there he assisted in cutting the timber from the present site of the city of Lansing. In the spring of 1849 he made arrangements to go to California by way of the "Horn," but after proceeding a short distance discovered that his money had been stolen. The following spring he took the overland route, going by team and passing through Oswego, Illinois, within a few miles of which he was later to settle. He engaged in mining in California for over a year, returning to the east by way of the isthmus. He purchased a farm in the neighborhood in which he was reared with the money he made from his mining ventures. He sold out and started for Illinois in 1853, taking with him

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3. The original manuscript in the form of a notebook is now in the possession of the editor's sister, Mrs. Philip (Levancia Herrington) Buchheit of Spartanburg, South Carolina.

his wife Emeline A. Bent whom he had married on January 22, 1852. In 1854 George J. Squires accompanied by his wife and her father and brother went to Austin, Texas, to look for cattle. They spent several months driving 500 head to Illinois. This drive has been referred to as the first cattle drive from Texas to Illinois.<sup>4</sup>

Miss Levancia Bent who kept the diary passed her forty-ninth birthday on the trail. She made her home with Emeline, her sister, as long as she lived, passing away at the Squires' homestead near Oswego, Illinois, in May following the death of George J. Squires in January, 1900. Levancia Bent's father, Silas Proctor Bent, was born in Mt. Holly, Vermont, in 1794 and died in De Kalb, Illinois, in 1874. Levancia (originally spelled Levantea) was the fourth of six children born to Silas Bent's second wife, Orythea (Shaw) Bent, the oldest being Emeline.<sup>5</sup>

## THE DIARY

### Tuesday, July 11th [1882]

We were troubled with moschotoes [sic] last night, but I was more troubled about some drunken men that were shooting around after dark, and calling to us to tell them where they were . . . had lost their way. [We] stopped at Evanston<sup>6</sup> for Ora<sup>7</sup> and the mail. . . . Evanston is quite a town, but lacks shade and a place to hide old empty cans and bottles. [We] pitched our tent two miles this side on Bear River. Our boy guide<sup>8</sup> has seen us safe through Utah and has gone home. John<sup>9</sup> has joined us, and now our fam-

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4. See George Squires Herrington, "An Early Cattle Drive from Texas to Illinois," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. LV, No. 2, October, 1951, pp. 267-269.

5. The biographical data on this and preceding pages was taken from the *Genealogical and Biographical Record of Kendall and Will Counties*, Illinois. Chicago: Biographical Publishing Company, 1901, pp. 253-255; and from Allen H. Bent, *The Bent Family in America*. Boston: D. Clapp & Son, 1900. The latter publication is a genealogical account of the Bent family in America beginning at Sudbury, Massachusetts, in 1638 with the arrival from England of John and Martha Bent and their five children. The migration of the Bent family as revealed in this account may be regarded as a microcosm of the Westward Movement in American history.

6. Wyoming.

7. Ora Ellsworth and his sister Sadie were probably friends of the family. They accompanied the group on the train trip to Salt Lake City.

8. Son of the owner of the livery stable in Salt Lake City.

9. John Squires, son of George J. Squires, had left the party in Salt Lake City on July 6th, and had gone to Idaho to look after a Mr. Smith's flock of sheep.



ily are all together. [We] have settled down to house keeping for a week, taken off and dusted our second best raiment, and put on calico and sunbonnets. [I] painted a few flowers this afternoon and explored the banks of the river . . .

### Wednesday, July 12th

Mary<sup>10</sup> and Willie<sup>11</sup> are doing the washing in the old primitive way; camp fire on the banks of the river; plenty of water, and bushes to burn and dry clothes on. Grace<sup>12</sup> sent for some yeast cakes, and tried to make some home made bread, but it didn't rise. We bake good [sic] in the oil stove oven or bake kettle. Em<sup>13</sup> has a good time wandering around, and I am searching for a best view for a picture.

### Thursday, July 13th

It is quite a climb up to my studio on the rocks . . . I can't help but anticipate the pangs of dissapointment [sic] and defeat in store for me when I call my picture finished and compare the copy with the original, but I must try it if it does make me miserable . . . [I] feel as though I had taken my allowance of punishment today in a blistered face. My hands are like toads' backs; [I] have always wished to look plump and fat, but find on looking in the glass that plumpness to be becoming should be more equally and judiciously distributed. I made a good target for the sun way up in my lofty perch on the rocks. I am usually quite oblivious to discomfort when doing congenial work, but work this afternoon wasn't so absorbing but that I had a vague sense of being parboiled.

### Friday, July 14th

This morning Willie constructed a shelter for me from a piece of the old fly cloth, fastened to some sticks wigwam fashion. [I] use his music rack for an easal [sic] and camp stool to sit on. [I] thought my arrangements very perfect under the circumstances until the sun made it necessary to change my position. The rock floor wouldn't accommodate itself to easal and stool, so I discarded both, and hang on to my canvas with one hand and paint with the other. [In the] middle of the afternoon [I] was obliged to pick up my work and get down from my perch or have everything carried off for me by the wind that commenced blowing about

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10. Mary (Bent) Earle, sister of Levancia Bent and Emeline (Bent) Squires and widow of Dr. J. B. Earle of DeKalb, Illinois.

11. Willie Earle, son of Mrs. Dana Earle (Martha Bent) of Lake City, Iowa.

12. Grace Squires, daughter of George and Emeline Squires.

13. Emeline (Bent) Squires, wife of George J. Squires.

noon every day. My canopy danced about on the rocks, keeping me in an expectant state of disaster to my picture; until finally, it collapsed and left me to the mercy of the cheerful sunshine again. All those little annoyances with a liberal sprinkling of sand on my wet sky almost persuade me that I am working under difficulties. We have very cold night and have to heat stones for our feet . . . [We] have slept warmer since George<sup>14</sup> exchanged our cots for wool sacks filled with hay; keep one to lie on under the trees.

### Sunday, July 16th

. . . After dinner we all took a ride out to Almy, a suburban town of Evanston, a coal mine town. The inhabitants are Chinamen and their antagonists, the Irish. [On] the first street are a higher grade of Chinese. Their houses are ornamented with patches of bright colors covered with their hieroglyphics. [On] the next two long streets were plain rough buildings, all alike. It is [a] hot day and their doors were open so that we could get a glympse [sic] now and then as we rode past of their housekeeping. The dirty floors, rough benches for chairs, boxes, and rubbish filling their rooms is [sic] so unlike anything we see among our own people that we felt as though we were in a foreign land . . . [We] felt as though we were at home again when we got into Ireland with their white curtains and plants in the windows. On the way home [we] came through a deserted Indian camp. If we had arrived a few days sooner, [we] should probably have had them for near neighbors.

### Thursday, July 20th

. . . I have had a touch of mountain fever; two nights and a day seemed like a long troubled dream, neither asleep or awake, sort of stupor. Em gave me rhubarb and podophylyn. [I] drank freely of sage brush tea which is said to be a cure for mountain fever. I feel much better today but weak. The ride has done me good. We are on the road again, our first day of sheep driving . . . Our night camp is near a stream of ice water from the mountain . . .

### Friday, July 21st

All can walk this morning but myself; am too weak . . . [We] met a train of emigrants bound for Washington Territory. . . . John Turpin from Salt Lake, one of our shepherds, gave an exhibition of his horsemanship. It was really wonderful how he could stick on to such a tearing, pitching animal that none of the other men could ride. The boys were so enthusiastic over his valor that we were afraid the

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14. George J. Squires.

young man would break his neck for their amusement. We crossed an old California trail, and camp on a pebbly stream. [We] would be in sight of Hilliard but for the high mountain shutting us in. We are on a branch of Bear River so its [sic] called Bear Town. [It's] a natural place for bears, but they don't show themselves; neither does the town. A more suitable appellation would be city of the dead . . . .

### **Saturday, July 22nd**

It is bright and clear this morning. We shall stay here awhile for the sheep to be dipped.<sup>15</sup> It was curious to see them pour over the rocks down the side of the mountain like a cascade. Ora looked a mere speck above them. . . .

### **Sunday, July 23rd**

A government train thundered by close to our tent this morning before we were out of bed. Em and I feel very agueish and miserable; we are in search of health.

### **Tuesday, July 25th**

I was sick all Sunday night. Yesterday Em gave me a sweat and medicine. . . . We have moved a mile and a half nearer Hilliard. Am feeling better. When I get used to eating outdoors and can relish my meals as the men do, I shall be all right. I never enjoyed sharing my food with bugs and flies [sic] as people at picnics appear to. I am living on cove oysters at present.

### **Wednesday, July 26th**

Great rejoicing [sic] in camp. George received a telegram from Ben with the glad tidings of a new born son.<sup>16</sup> We could scarcely keep from crying from excitement; shall be anxious to get a letter with particulars. It is so hard that we should be so far away at such a time.

### **Thursday, July 27th**

We have lost our Turpin. He shouldered his blanket and set out for Salt Lake. He will never find a more appreciative audience for his rare stories. . . .

### **Friday, July 28th**

Grace has two objects of affection, a horned toad and a poor little motherless lamb that would have to starve if left to the tender mercies of the men. Any extra humanity be-

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15. The sheep were immersed in a solution in order to restrict spread of disease. In 1882 Wyoming authorized a territorial veterinarian and the following year Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho passed laws to prevent the spread of scab and other contagious diseases in sheep. Wentworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 454-55.

16. The telegram sent by Benjamin F. Herrington of Yorkville, Illinois, announced the birth of the editor's father, George Squires Herrington, Sr., on July 25, 1882, to Mrs. B. F. Herrington (Georgianna Squires, daughter of George and Emeline Squires).

stowed upon animals in a trip like this would be rather unprofitable in a money sense. Milk has to be brought from Hilliard on horseback to feed it. . . .

### **Saturday, July 29th**

Ora, Mary, and Grace rode over to the Indian camp this morning on horseback. Ora offered to buy a deer skin that an old squaw was tanning, as an excuse for their curiosity, but she didn't seem inclined to have any deal with the pale faces. We saw some wonderful riding done by a party of young Indians about a half mile from here. I never saw anything to compare with it; appeared as though they were being blown about by the wind. It seemed cruel on such a hot day. One poor pony dropped dead. I wondered if Willie wasn't afraid of them. They raced so near where he was herding. George has returned from Evanston where he and John went to meet the other flock of sheep and buy provisions. He brought ripe currants and other luxuries including an old batchelor [sic] that he once met down in Texas.

### **Sunday, July 30th**

Our company staid [sic] all night. He is fairly intelligent, a great talker. He knows all about this country; has wandered over the Rockies for the last 30 years. He bought the pitching horse; didn't object to him on account of his little tricks. The horse seems to have found his master. He walked off as docile as a cat; picked up his feet rather dainty at first, but when his master made a few sarcastic remarks, expressing a desire to know if he didn't feel real well, and if this world wasn't large enough for him, he concluded that any effort to get up a sensation would be time wasted. . . . Mr. Poage, Crawford, and Albee have arrived with the other flock; have had a hard time.<sup>17</sup> There has been so little feed that the sheep and lambs have died off terribly . . . Mr. Poage had a severe time with Crawford, who drinks. He wants George to ship him. . . .

### **Monday, July 31st**

The men are busy dipping and sorting sheep, and we are getting things into shape for a start tomorrow.

### **Tuesday, August 1st**

. . . We stopped at Hilliard for supplies [sic]. Grace gave her lamb to the Postmistress' little girl. . . . The town is very new and unattractive. A couple of dirty savages promenaded the main street clothed in thick blankets and long black hair. The train came in with a platform loaded with

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17. The editor has been unable to identify Poage, Crawford, and Albee. There is some evidence to indicate that Albee was a friend of the Squires.

them. They get free rides. The conductor recognized some of our party. We passed Aspen, another small town. . . .

### **Wednesday, August 2nd**

I drove the carriage this morning. . . . We had dinner the other side of Piedmont; tasted the best of any meal on the road, potatoes, cucumbers, onions, and mutton. I wonder the Indians didn't scare my appetite away; I don't think I am quite through trembling yet. Two bands met at a respectful distance from our camp, and took a good long look at us. We returned the compliment. I was afraid they would take offense at George's leveling his field glass at them. Two of the young men more brave or more curious than the rest came flying down on their ponies to get a better look at us, and stationed themselves just behind the carriage where I sat reading, and there sat as immovable as statues, peering out through their long black hair dragged over their faces in a most uncomfortable looking manner. It seemed an age before their curiosity was sufficiently gratified to take their departure. . . . We camped not far this side of Piedmont as the boys took the wrong road through a canon towards Fort Bridger. It was after dark before George got them back. They camp on the other side of the railroad track. It is lonesome to be separated in so wild looking a place.

### **Thursday, August 3rd**

George was off after the horses before we were awake; found them beyond the noon camp. They must have worked hard to get there, fettered as they were. I saw a badger this morning; the ground is perforated with their homes, but its [sic] seldom one is seen. . . . A little farther on we came upon quite a colony of Washington Territory emigrants. . . . Three of the men came out to visit George. . . .

### **Friday, August 4th**

We walked a couple of miles in the bed of a dry river. Old Major followed along to protect us. Poor old Maj. was fired at twice yesterday from a passing train. We made purchases of dry goods and groceries at Carter, a town of a little more importance than the two preceeding [sic] ones. . . . We camp to-night on a plateau above Carter.

### **Saturday, August 5th**

Wolves serenaded us, or rather the sheep, last night. . . . We had our first rain since leaving Beartown. The fly stretching from the top of the carriage to the wagon is made of thick cloth; water runs off as from a roof. We caught it in pans for dish washing. . . . We passed Church Buttes this afternoon. They are the most wonderful formations of rock and sand. They represent my ideal of old

country architecture; churches and castles with dormor [sic] and bay windows, French roofs, projecting cornices, and deep entrances. The Saints when passing through here on their way to the promised land found the designs for their tabernacle, I feel sure; for it is a perfect copy of one of these architectural mountains. . . . We had baking powder pancakes for supper, not a success, digestible as leather.

### **Sunday, August 6th**

It hasn't seemed at all like the sabbath. We camped on Ham's Fork tonight. We had a good deal of excitement and hard work for the men. About forty sheep rushed into the river to drink, and couldn't pull themselves out of the mud. John and Willie had to wade in up to their waists, tie a rope around the necks of the sheep, and George and Ora pull them up the bank. It was very dark, the wind blowing terribly. One of us held the lantern, while the others kept the sheep back from rushing in after their brethren. It was dreadful at first to hear their cries for help, but when we found that they didn't drown easily, we could look on with a great deal of interest and some amusement . . .

### **Monday, August 7th**

. . . Such a storm of wind and rain came on soon after starting that we were obliged to stop for shelter behind the butte; heaviest thunder we have heard since we left home, but it was soon over. Riding in the rain and standing in my thin slippers on the cold ground last night has given me an old fashioned bones-ache. Em dont [sic] feel well either. We camp on Blacks Fork. These Forks are so attractive that I look for an Indian camp. They always find the pleasant places; have an instinct for the beautiful in nature.

### **Tuesday, August 8th**

A coyote killed a lamb last night. They are such sneaks. I felt some better this morning, not as well at noon, but better again tonight. Em is feeling very miserable to-night. We met a wagon train of men going to work on the Oregon short line, grading near Granger, a thriving western town of a saloon, depot, and a dwelling house or two. George was here last year at the birth and christening of the new town. It was baptized in beer. A barrel of beer or whiskey is the cornerstone of these far western towns. . . .

### **Wednesday, August 9th**

. . . George concluded as he would have to go a day or two in advance to make preparations for ferrying across Green River, it would be well to take the sick along and find something we could eat. Ora took cold at Hams Fork and has been running down ever since until he is added to the sick list. We rode 24 miles, and camp on an island back of the town. Ora dined at a restaurant; we other invalids

took ours a la picnic. George brought us all the delicacies of the season, strawberry pie, peaches, plums, white grapes, tomatoes, lemons, hot tea, roast beef hot, bologna, and the best bread we have tasted since we left Illinois. . . . We have neighbors at the other end of the island, a family going to Washington Territory. They know how to keep house on the road. They wash, bake, and brew; really make emplings and bake bread. We borrowed a kettle and some flour to make porridge for Em to-night, as we left all our camp equipage behind. . . . We have crossed over to the mainland. Em thought at first that she hadn't courage to ride through the river; would walk over the railroad bridge. I told her I had more nerve for the ford than the bridge. The carriage is high and heavy which makes it safer, but it swayed about some going through the deepest places. . . . We can consider ourselves in the suburbs of Green River City. . . . I haven't learned the population yet. It couldn't be a very large town shut in as it is between the river and the loveliest range of Buttes since Church Buttes but entirely different, soft colors. It is a narrow valley with car shops, courthouse, and a few stores. . . .

#### **Saturday, August 12th**

Mr. Smith appeared unexpectedly before breakfast. We didn't know that he was anywhere near us. He surprised us the same way at Evanston. He stayed to help get the sheep across, but they didn't succeed after shouting and jumping all day. George hired a boy to tie his pet lamb on the opposite shore as a decoy. The lad is quite sharp at a bargain. He demanded a \$1.25 for his services, when of course he would rather pay something than not to see the show.

#### **Sunday, August 13th**

. . . They are trying the sheep again if it is the sabbath. It is a case of necessity. The poor things will starve on that side of the river among the rocks. George ferried last year, but the ferryman is absent; don't [sic] feel that he is needed now that the river is low enough to be forded. The idea of a city without a bridge over its river! I suppose it wouldn't be used enough to pay as there is no one living west of here, east either for that matter. It is a city with no suburbs and no surrounding farming country. We have one flock of 4,000 on the island; will be guarded there to-night.

#### **Monday, August 14th**

. . . There was great rejoicing [sic] when the last sheep landed on this side; only lost six. They sailed over as quiet as lambs when they made up their minds to come. The boys started with them this afternoon. We had a good deal

of anxiety about Willie to-night. About noon he went in search of the horses that had strayed off over the mountains. At dark we thought it was time he was home if he wasn't lost. He had no overcoat, and the nights are like late fall, but about nine o'clock we heard a voice call from over the river that sounded familiar. George went with the lantern and piloted him and all the horses over. Now we can go to bed and sleep in peace. I think of poor Martha when danger threatens Willie.

#### **Tuesday, August 15th**

We rode to the city to buy eatables for a long campaign. Chinamen were delivering green corn, squashes, and other vegetables from house to house; probably from Nebraska. They carried their vegetables in long square pails suspended from each end of a long pole, and their peculiar teter [sic] give the pails a motion that makes them easier carried. . . . We broke up housekeeping and were on the road again by noon. We shall be out of sight of the railroad until we reach Laramie, 280 miles. A bird rode on the lines quite a distance, good omen. We passed the shepherds and their flocks; traveled 20 miles and put up at Brown's ranch. We get good pastures. . . . A ranchman drove into the yard as we did; had been to Green River City for the necessities, whiskey included. He treated George and sent a glass of the beverage to the ladies. He must have wondered where we learned our manners to refuse so kind an offer.

#### **Wednesday, August 16th**

. . . The sheep have been without water for two days; they made a raid on the pasture spring for which George had to pay 10 dollars and \$2.50 for horse feed, rather expensive camping place. The young man carried out his father's orders not to let any droves to the spring in his absence with great thoroughness, the right age to feel the importance of his responsibility. . . .

#### **Thursday, August 17th**

We took dinner not far from a large cattle ranch. There were two houses within sight of each other, rare sight. We saw large flocks of sage hens. Ora met his Green River landlord out hunting. A young man called to inquire if we had seen his hunting companions. He got lost and was alone all night. We sent him in the direction of a wagon load of sportsmen that we met hunting deer. This afternoon I had a chat with a barefooted German lady walking with her two grandchildren. She asked a great many questions about the road back to Green River. She said they should have to stop there, "to earn money to buy grub." They must have courage or want of prudence to start out so destitute. They had two teams; one horse had given out,



and one of the men was taking his place. We camp on the pretty water to-night that the old lady seemed so delighted to tell me about; have our soap stones as we do in the winter at home. . . .

### Friday, August 18th

. . . We bought a quarter of venison at a ranch. They have more than they can dispose of here. In winter deer come in herds and look down upon them from the mountain just back and above their shanty, so the proprietor told Mary and I [sic]. . . . He says that they can't help making money raising stock, for it costs nothing to raise it; but once in 10 years have had a bad winter that kills it all off. He looks like an honest man, but has two Villianous [sic] looking partners; and as one of the horses slipped out of sight and all the searching didn't find it perhaps they found it. They were willing to give George an old broken down hog-backed horse on the chance of finding it. George thought it the best thing he could do, for he was told that it wasn't safe to follow lost horses very far into the mountains. Men who follow that business are necessarily desperate characters, for they know that lynch is the law for horse stealing in this unprotected country . . .

### Saturday, August 19th

We met a long line of emigration. . . .

### Sunday, August 20th

. . . Grace celebrated her 21st birthday riding in the rain; steadiest drizzle we have had on the trip. . . . We camp to-night in the shadow of another of nature's wonders, more architecture. There are huge piles of slaty rocks of every color from black to white with openings here and there for wild animals to burrow. Deer make their homes here; suppose that is why it is called Antelope Springs. Two or three men have started a ranch here and have a boarder, a geologist, collecting specimens for Yale College. There is a good field of labor here. I wish he could examine our specimens and see if they are of any value. Two young men driving sheep came to inquire about the roads to Cheyenne. They have 3,500 in their flock; lost 2,000 last winter in California.

### Monday, August 21st

The boys took the wrong road and while waiting for George to find them, Em and I had a good time searching the sand hills. There is where we find the best agates. I found some of the best specimens yet, they all say, but may not be as valuable as some of the rougher ones. One piece looks like Cornelian, others like grained wood. . . . We crossed Bitter Creek and pitched our tent opposite the

ruins of an old stage stand tavern on the California trail. John is having his time feeling sick.

#### **Tuesday, August 22nd**

I made a pencil sketch of the stage stand, and rode over on Billy to get a better view of it. There are two; one for men the other for horses. There is an old dry well nearby. The patent medicine spirit has reached this far off land. St. Jacob's Oil decorates the walls of the old ruin. Water in this creek makes strong suds. They take the horses back two miles; dare not give them so much alkali to drink . . . We met emigrants who told us we should have to drive 15 miles to find water. We took all the horses that could be spared and tried to drive through before bed time, but had to stop 5 miles short. . . .

#### **Wednesday, August 23rd**

. . . The boys had a great time getting the sheep through ravines and grease wood. . . . We had another scare about Willie. He and Ora went to take the horses out for feed, and he didn't come back. They went to the Poage camp; he hadn't been there. Then the fear was that he had fallen into a gully and had been killed. George and John started out in different directions; fired their revolvers, but he didn't hear any of the tumult. In due time he walked into camp as unconscious of all the excitement he had created as could be . . .

#### **Thursday, August 24th**

. . . We overtook a Mr. Taylor,<sup>18</sup> a sheep man, with 3,800 California sheep. George wants some of them bad [sic]. He tried his reasoning and persuading powers on him, but to no effect, as he is a Scotchman and knows what he wants to do. . . . Cove oysters for supper.

#### **Friday, August 25th**

Boys came in about nine with the sheep. Mr. Taylor camped near; could hear him shoot wolves in the night. He came and visited George while he ate breakfast. We weren't up yet. . . . Mary and Willie killed a snake, the first they had seen. Pepper soup for supper. Beautiful moonlight night.

#### **Saturday, August 26th**

It is clear and cool as usual. We mended our straw beds . . . Mr. Poage stopped and had a chat with George about Oswego. Folks must seem somewhat different to George from last year's trip with no one to speak to that he had

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18. In a letter to the editor Edward N. Wentworth suggests that it is highly probable that this Mr. Taylor was the Robert Taylor who ". . . strove more than any other single man, by personal precept and practice, to increase the numbers and quality of Wyoming sheep." Edward N. Wentworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 327 ff. and 619-20.

ever known before. We camped near Liscoe's ranch, 25 miles from Rawlins, which town is on the railroad. He keeps a variety store; most important commodities, whiskey and cigars. . . . Mr. Taylor told Em today that she could have found fossils at Barrel and Antelope Springs. He found some and also made the acquaintance of Mr. Smith, the geologist. We are full of regret that we didn't know more while there. Mr. Liscoe dropped in while we were at supper in the tent. He seems to admire our domestic arrangements. We bought some nice venison of him, also milk for our mush, and a plenty of other eatables to refill our empty store room. . . .

### Sunday, August 27th

Sent mail to Rawlins. This is a four corners. There is a great deal of travel through here by government trains going west to the fort. George sold hog-back to Mr. Liscoe for 22½ dollars, a lamb for half box cigars. . . . Our drive or rather walk, for Mary and I walked nearly all the way that afternoon, lay between two high mountains. . . . We called on the Poage family; met with a friendly reception. We were seated in the dining room on a couple of spare pails. Mr. Poage was making preparations to do the family washing, regardless of the day. Evidently he believes that cleanliness is next to Godliness, only reversed. . . .

### Monday, August 28th

We have had the most disagreeable [sic] rainy night we have had yet. I mention all of the storms because they are the exception. I have undergone a great deal of suffering of body and mind to-day. Mary was taken with pain in her bowels last night. I thought perhaps she had taken cold getting wet and it would wear off after riding and warming up in the middle of the day, but she gradually grew worse. When we stopped at noon, I got out the medicines, charcoal, slippery elm, and brandy. By that time we had made up our minds that she had been poisoned by drinking too freely of the copperas sulphur water. Em and I drank it, but only as a medicine. She took it for thirst and drank all she wanted. It was like cholera. I held her hands or tried to during her paroxysms of pain, but everything turned so dark, was almost paralyzed [sic]. Grace had to hold me and John tend Mary. She grew worse so fast that I was scared out of fainting. John, Willie, Grace, and I worked for dear life, for a dear life, and saved it, by Divine permission. Believers in especial providences would say that it was in answer to the prayers in our hearts, but I can't think that the result would have been the same if we had sat down and trusted entirely to the prayers. It is faith and works, my creed. . . . A large company of emi-

grants camped near. They were the best equipped for travelling of any that we have seen yet; had rocking chairs, and a woman was kneading bread on a real moulding board. The men were starting out with their guns.

#### **Tuesday, August 29th**

Mary is nearly as well as ever again. Her cup of cold poison was a powerful medicine. We all examined a beaver dam, and took away relics in the shape of sticks sawed by their teeth. Before noon George pointed out Elk Mountain. We should have taken it for thunderheads. As we journeyed on, it gradually assumed the appearance of a mountain, and by night was an unmistakable mountain, reflecting all the beautiful colors of the clouds at sunset . . .

#### **Wednesday, August 30th**

We reached the Platte before noon, and such a lovely picture lay before us as we rode down the long hill, we thought of the parks in Chicago with the addition of a variety of grand rocks. We ford two channels to get to the mainland. We liked the island best, but it was reserved for the last band of sheep as Mr. Taylor calls a flock. . . . They could only get one flock over. The boys are in high spirits after standing in cold water three or four hours. It would take something worse than water to dampen such an excess of spirits as they are blessed with most of the time. They are the three best natured boys in the world. This wholesome air gives them unbounded appetites, and I am not far behind, for I think I never relished a dinner better in my life. . . . I can imagine Indians skulking around the projecting rocks, and peering down from above, since Em and Willie think they have found one of their battlefields. They have found bullets, arrowheads, fragments of clothing, little shoes, and bones . . .

#### **Thursday, August 31st**

I opened my eyes this morning with a thankful heart that we are mercifully preserved through the silent watches of the night. The morning hymn that Ma<sup>19</sup> taught us when children seems appropriate, "Lord I thank Thee that the night in peace hath passed away, and I can see by thy fair light, my Father's smile that makes it day." It would hardly seem appropriate to one unfamiliar with the sounds that assailed my waking ears. The gentle shepherds were persuading the last flock across the river. It seemed to require all the eloquence of a war dance. John and Mr. Poage seemed in danger of dislocating their limbs with their gymnastics. The sheep would start in all right; get about so far when all at once the leader would make up his mind

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19. Orythea (Shaw) Bent, wife of Silas Proctor Bent.

that he didn't believe in coercion, make a sudden and unexpected turn and rush back up the bank again with all his followers at his heels, sheep fashion. 32,000 little hoofs scampering over the rocky river bottom with an accompaniment of frantic yells from men and dogs would be rather startling to unaccustomed ears, but to mine was sweet music, the soothing assurance that a thoroughly live spirit still inhabited the body. I suppose I am unnecessarily fidgety and fanciful, but I can't help thinking of the numerous massacres [sic] scattered over this land, and not so long ago either, and that we are a small and helpless band. Of course the government is supposed to protect with its forts the people passing through, but at the same time allows a liberal supply of whiskey and firearms. A civilized drunkard is bad enough, but the noble red man is said to be a demon under the influence of liquor. . . .

### Friday, September 1st

My birthday, a 49'er on the old California Trail. George lacked a year of being a California 49'er. I can scarcely realize my abundant years in this rejuvenating atmosphere without the aid of a glass. It's a comfort to have a season of rest from, "seeing ourselves as others see us." George has had a long ride after the horses; they were off in search of water. . . . We saw a herd of elk in the distance. Took dinner near Pass Creek. . . . Last night Elk Mountain was east of us, and to-night, west of us. We camp near Goat Mountain; not as grand but more interesting than neighbor Elk. . . . We were told by a man near here that there is a lake at the summit where goats and mountain sheep come to swim. . . . A man told George that he had a young cow killed last night by a panther or mountain lion [sic] they call them. . . . My mind runs on rattlesnakes as we camp on a creek by that name; crossed it four times to-day.

### Saturday, September 2nd

We replenished our stock of provisions at Fort Halleck. We had canned green corn for dinner, as good as fresh. Grace had quite a visit with the ladies . . . They told Grace about the bloody lake tragedy, a peaceful looking body of water glistening in the sunlight only a little way from here. Four men were killed by Indians; two escaped by hiding behind the rocks. I should think there had been a battle here by the size of the burying ground almost opposite their house. I counted 50 graves with no town for a hundred miles I suppose. There is only one house in sight; neighbors are about 30 miles apart . . .

**Sunday, September 3rd**

Passed the night at Medicine Bow. Willie played his violin. It echoed through the grove nearby delightfully. Wish we could persuade him to play oftener. We were a cozy family around the big camp fire made of logs. It is a rare thing to find timber to camp near. Mary and I gathered black currants to mix with our service berries, as Liscoe calls them; makes the best sauce, one so sweet and the other so sour. . . . Took our weekly bath. The carriage makes a good bath room. We can put the curtains down tight. . . . The boys use the covered wagon for their dressing room. We met more emigrants. . . .

**Monday, September 4th**

. . . A long train of travellers for Washington Territory halted near our camp, and two loquacious members of the party made themselves very obnoxious to George by persisting in their endeavors to have a good visit while we were eating dinner, but the boys enjoyed it. One of them was the experienced traveller. . . .

**Tuesday, September 5th**

We saw an antelope and a band of 20,000 sheep. Crossed Cooper Creek. We are on Laramie Plains; can see smoke from the city 30 miles away. . . . We haven't seen sage brush for two days; have to gather anything we can find for fuel as we drive along. Dined near where they are getting out railroad ties brought from the pine woods on the mountains. There is quite a settlement. George went over and bought some apples. To-night we camp near an emigrant community; children up on the highest hills, singing, happy as larks. There is a sheep corral close by. . . .

**Wednesday, September 6th**

We had our nooning<sup>20</sup> on the Little Laramie. It is a pleasant valley, and there is quite a little town scattered along the river. There is a better class of houses than we [have] seen for weeks. Some are framed and painted homes. It seems to be a valuable grass region. Reapers are going in every direction. Illinoisans wouldn't waste time cutting it, but it is worth cutting here at 40 dollars a ton. A man at Fort Halleck sold 12,000 dollars worth this year. . . . We had great difficulty getting sheep through wire fenced lanes. We are beginning to meet the obstructions of civilization. Little Larimie [sic] is 20 miles from Laramie City. )

20. In the parlance of sheep trailing, the day stop was known as "nooning" and the night stop as "bedding down." Wentworth, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

**Thursday, September 7th**

We have accomplished our 280 miles from Green River in one month. Larimie [sic] is much more of a city than G.R., but not as interesting in regard to scenery because more familiar and common. . . . We drove through the city just before dusk, stopping at grocery's [sic] to replenish. We camp halfway between the city and Fort Sanders. Oysters for supper.)

**Friday, September 8th**

. . . We shall be off the line of the R.R. again; shall take a cross cut to Cheyenne instead of going around by Sherman. We have been discussing the question when and where to take the cars for Denver. George had decided it should be here, but has learned that we can get excursion tickets at Cheyenne. We are all very glad for we shall have a longer ride through the mountains. . . . A wolf took a nice lamb in broad day light; must be very hungry to be so bold. . . .)

**Monday, September 11th**

Were up and stirring this morning for our 20 mile ride. Mary made a ginger cake last night for our lunch. The men will have to do their own house-keeping for a while. John is our escort. . . . Reached Cheyenne a little after noon. Ride seemed short, perfect roads. Passed through Fort D. H. Russel [sic]; stopped to see them drill. We are at the Interocean, good accommodations. . . . It is a little over two months since we have slept under a roof; seems close and warm.)

**Tuesday, September 12th**

. . . We left Cheyenne between one and two; cars crowded. . . . Denver strikes me as a bustling old city; doesn't seem a bit new. We stop at the Hotel Brunswick; dollar a day for room; meals on the European plan. . . .

**Wednesday, September 13th**

Spent to-day at the mineral exposition, exhibition not confined to minerals. . . .

**Friday, September 15th**

Well we have seen the great mining city and realized all our expectations of a good time . . . We stop at the Dyer house to-night; reached C. [Cheyenne] about noon. All but John were in favor of moving on after dinner. He says there is nothing but section houses; no place to put up for the night, so we decide to start early in the morning. I have one of my old ague headaches for the first time this summer; don't know how I'll ever be able to live in doors again. . . .

**Saturday, September 16th**

. . . 50 miles of travel to-day. Didn't find our folks until after dark; am glad to find them all alive after what I read in a paper I picked up in the cars coming up from Denver, that Indians were making a raid up through western Nebraska, and troops had been sent for. Pine Bluffs is the last town in Wyoming, and we are 6 miles this side in the states. . . . We are coming into the rattlesnake and prairie dog region; shall miss our pleasant mountain walks with no fear of snakes before us. . . .

**Sunday, September 17th**

It is not so unpleasant to get back to camp life again if all the dish cloths and kettles are black with the smoke of pitch pine that they have been burning in our absence. We can scrub it off. . . . Lovely hazy atmosphere this morning; can think of nothing but cornfields, ripe pumpkins, and orchards; but its [sic] only a fancy, for we are 250 miles from such luxuries. Saw more of agriculture between Cheyenne and Denver than anywhere this side of eastern Neb. We passed Marshall. It will be depot and section house alternately until we take the cars at G. I. [Grand Island, Nebraska].

**Tuesday, September 19th**

. . . We are near Potter, 437 miles from Omaha. . . .

**Wednesday, September 20th**

. . . A woman at a section house brought out some potatoes to show us what could be raised on their ranch. They were very large. The farm must be somewhere on a stream. They irrigate of course. There is nothing growing near the house. They have a large flock of chickens. It was quite delightful to sit in the carriage and look into their open door and see them set their table for supper with a cloth and white dishes. We commenced our housekeeping with table cloths and napkins at Evanston, but soon learned that the less washing we had to do in alkali water the better.

**Thursday, September 21st**

We added to our stock of provisions at Sydney, quite an important town, saloons and billiard halls by the dozen. There is a road leading to Black Hills from here. . . . Ora has made a change in his wardrobe. We saw evidence of it as we rode past a clothing store; recognized familiar garments on the walk back of the store. It is a tidy way of disposing of cast off clothing; very off-hand and western. We passed through Camp Clark.

**Friday, September 22nd**

We left a poor sheep dying from the bite of a rattlesnake. F. Albee gave Mary a rattle he took from one yesterday. . . . We bought a gallon of milk of a thrifty Irish woman at



a section house. She only charged 80 cts. George gave her a few pounds of tallow, and she threw off 10 cts on the milk. . . .

### **Saturday, September 23rd**

Wolves almost came into camp last night. Men and dogs gave chase. George fired at them twice, but they kept up their music all night, bursting out unexpectedly here and there. This forenoon we stopped the carriage three times for George to whip the life out of two rattlers and one blue racer. The boys killed 7. We stopped at Chappel depot. A woman gave us a gallon of milk. People are not all alike in this country any more than in other places. We had ham and eggs and musk and watermelon for dinner. Passed Lodge Pole Station. . . .

### **Sunday, September 24th**

Mary and I took our morning walk with much care and trepidation over the burnt grass as the safest place to walk. We passed over another Indian battlefield, Julesburg. It looks as tho it had had its death blow. George says Denver Junction a little farther on killed it. We didn't see a live being but an old hen. She told us that the town wasn't quite deserted. This has been the warmest day of the season. Mary and I were in Boston a year ago now, which was their hottest weather.

### **Monday, September 25th**

We took our dinner a mile this side of Denver Junction. Lee and Bluet [Blewett]<sup>21</sup> were shipping sheep near the depot. . . . We are in Colorado again for a few hours. We have left Lodge Pole for good, and shall follow the Platte all the way to Grand Island, over 200 miles. We stopped at a horse ranch for water. We knew that a woman lived there; it was so cozy. There were lots of chickens, house plants, curtains and vines at the windows; but when we found that the housekeeper was a young man, pride in our sagacity took a drop. Wind blows a gale to-night, but warm.

### **Tuesday, September 26th**

The wind blew all day yesterday and all night and so hard today that it is like a desert sandstorm on the dry bed of the Platte. The river is very broad and shallow here and dry in places. We had the greatest difficulty getting and

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21. "Lee and Blewett were originally railroad contractors, but became the largest early firm to operate from the east in California, Oregon, and Washington. Their eastern headquarters were in Fremont, Nebraska, where they both fed and traded in trail sheep. They are estimated to have handled over a half million sheep between 1871 and 1887." Quotation from Wentworth, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

eating our dinner; extracted a good deal of fun out of our difficulty. A man hurried down from the railroad to warn us about fire. George told him he should be likely to be careful as he had 8,000 head of sheep to risk. He went away satisfied. We stopped at a ranch for water, three houses and no family, all men. We camp behind a snow fence for shelter. There is a special train on the track with men to make the fences secure for the winter. I wouldn't believe they could be such a protection against the wind.

### **Wednesday, September 27th**

... We are all agitating the question whether to go or not to go to Grand Island with George. John wants us to go; is afraid of the responsibility of caring for us through a hard storm, if we have any. "His sister, his mother, and his aunts" vote against it. I guess it is carried, for we don't hear any more about it...

### **Thursday, September 28th**

It is cool and bright. We stopped for eatables and horse shoeing at Ogallala. ... We overtook the first emigrants that we have seen going our way. ...

### **Friday, September 29th**

The boys drove the sheep across the Platte for water; nearly foundered them on the burnt stubble. Indians set fires and tore up the track along here when they passed through. They say it is their country. George left for Grand Island to-night to see what prospect there is for wintering his sheep there.

### **Saturday, September 30th**

... We realize that we are in a land of dew and dampness; miss our good dry morning walks, but we walk nevertheless and keep a sharp lookout for rattlesnakes. The eye that was devoted to mountains in Utah and Wyoming is needed for snakes in Neb. ... We passed Alkali and camped near a cattle ranch; pretty place with two houses, occupied by rough, swearing men.

### **Sunday, October 1st**

... We are past O'Fallons, 154 miles from Grand Island. The sheep are getting very lame; many of them are on their knees most of the time. Ora says its [sic] because it is Sunday.

### **Monday, October 2nd**

... We have come to our first country schoolhouse with the exception of the one in Hoytsville since we left home. It was so natural to see the children rush towards the schoolhouse when the bell rang. Close by is a farmhouse where we bought butter and milk. We can say farm now instead of ranch for they have a cornfield and trees growing around the house. ...

**Tuesday, October 3rd**

We drove into North Platte City and had our dinner on the common, just this side of the home of Buffalo Bill. . . . This is the best looking town this side of Cheyenne. . . . We had to wait 5 or 6 hours for the sheep to be driven over and through the Platte. The railroad bridge is half a mile long and is used for carriages as well as cars, an arrangement I never heard of before. A train had to wait for our sheep. This is the junction of the North and South Platte, and is quite picturesque with islands and bluffs. George came from Grand Island this morning; has arranged to dip sheep at Kearney. . . . Em bought a cake to give John a little festival on the eve of his departure for California. He is going for more sheep; will bring them by rail. . . .

**Wednesday, October 4th**

. . . We picked up a tired lamb that had dropped out of the flock; gave it a ride and saved it from the wolves. . . .

**Thursday, October 5th**

. . . We passed through Maxwell; not much farming yet, but a great deal of hay put up. There were two steam hay presses in sight should think Neb. could supply the world with hay. . . . We left our lamb with a York State man from Cayugua [sic] Co. . . . He wants to sell his ranch, for he can't get his boys interested in sheep farming, all of which he told us with the easy familiarity of an old neighbor. We had no doubt about his being Yankee from his lively desire to ask questions and be generally communicative. He didn't seem at all startled at our attractive appearance. He must have taken Mary and I for twins, with the same lop over the left eye in our respective sunbonnets. It is very convenient in a trip of this kind to be independent of much dress, but it isn't always so easy to be indifferent when gentlemen walk or ride up to the carriage to have a little talk with George, and who are probably more familiar with good manners and fine dress than we are, and have come west to make their fortunes because it can be done so much quicker and easier than in the older states. We sometimes fancy like the ostrich that we are escaping notice by keeping our heads back out of sight, but the instinctive politeness of the gentlemen won't excuse them from a few words of salutation to the ladies. "Well ladies, how do you enjoy travelling so far from civilization." It is quite a wonder why they associate us with civilized life; perhaps it is the carriage. If we were only as respectable as the emigrant ladies with their best hats, all flowers and ribbons, tidy dresses, and light colored aprons. We thought it would be a fine opportunity to wear out our old clothes. We bought some cotton dusters to cover the shabbiness, but they soon

looked worse than the dresses. Our way of washing doesn't take out grease spots. We have some of a better quality under the carriage seat with our hats, where we keep our second best to slip on when we come to towns. Our finery for state occasions is packed away in a large trunk in Mr. Poage's wagon. Grace looks well in her riding habit on horseback, and attracts a good deal of attention from passengers going through on the U.P. They seem to wonder where she dropped from. . . .

#### **Friday, October 6th**

. . . Our neighbor came this morning and took 70 lame sheep; paid from 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  dollars each. It seems a pity to give them away when a few days rest would make them all right again. . . . We passed through Bradys Island; met two emigrant wagons; wonder where they can be going so late in the season. . . . Apple dumplings for dinner.

#### **Saturday, October 7th**

George sold 300 more sheep. Had ham and eggs, turnips, potatoes, and minute pudding with cherries for dinner. I give our bill of fare when other items of interest fail. . . .

#### **Sunday, October 8th**

We had our first frost last night since we left the mountains. . . . The air is filled with sand hill cranes and wild geese; have come to prairie chickens. We saw a blue racer and a monster dead snake. We had dinner near Willow Island depot. Three sheep men dined with us, and three others stood around and looked wishful. One of them was so partial to stew that I was afraid he would injure himself. . . .

#### **Monday, October 9th**

George bought provisions at a station called Gould, named for the Rail Road King. It is a pity he couldn't infuse some of his life and enterprise into his namesake. It is the deadest kind of a town. We saw a house propped up to keep it from falling. The sand foundation was being carried off by the wind. Evidently the owner hasn't read his bible with care. . . .

#### **Tuesday, October 10th**

It rained all night. We didn't get started until near noon. We camp to-night a little east of Plum Creek, the last town I hope made famous by an Indian massacre. The little town looks very innocent and peaceful planted out on the prairie with not a tree for shelter. . . .

#### **Thursday, October 12th**

We had dinner near Overton, a town of no particular interest. There are farmhouses of sod; some of them look quite like houses with painted doors, curtains at the windows, house plants, and occasionally a flower garden. One

of the settlers, formerly from Bloomington, Illinois visiting us this evening, told of two young men that were burned to death in a prairie fire across the Platte opposite here. We have noticed nearly all the way that the ground looks black and burned over there. This side is more liable to fires I should think from sparks from the engines and emigrant camp fires. George is very careful to burn a place for the campfire. We can see fires in every direction, nights.

#### **Friday, October 13th**

... It grows more difficult every day now driving sheep through. ... The new unfenced farms are on the increase. ... We were somewhat fearful that we might have to participate in a little unpleasantness to-night when we saw a man ride down from a farmhouse in great haste while we were making preparations for the night camp, but didn't realize our anticipations. Whether it was the mollifying effect of so much beauty of dress and person among the ladies, or the "soft word that turneth away wrath" with the boys, but more likely he had no intention of being disagreeable [sic] if the boys complied with his request that the sheep be taken about a quarter of a mile back off his range, as he keeps sheep and has just dipped them and didn't like to run any risk of disease from contagion. The boys showed such a readiness to respect his rights that I think he was just a little suspicious that they would do as they like about it when he was out of sight. In the evening he came down with another man, perhaps to enforce his request if necessary, but finding it all satisfactory staid [sic] awhile for a visit with George. I can hear them holding sweet converse while I am trying to scribble in my diary by the light of the lantern hanging from the ridge pole of the tent. ...

#### **Saturday, October 14th**

... We pitched our tent this noon near a section house on the banks of a creek. Em, Mary, and Willie did the washing. It is as warm as summer. There is a strong wind to-night; prairie fires in all directions. George went to Kearney to make arrangements for dipping. He brought a postal from John dated Monday, San Francisco. ...

#### **Sunday, October 15th**

... We spread our tent to-day for the last time; shall be settled here for a few days, and then take the train at Kearney for home. We must make the most of the short time, and give a pleasant finish to our 4 months holiday. This is one of the most pleasant and sightly locations we have found in Nebraska, and doesn't seem a bit snaky as it did when we camped yesterday. We are among farms with their new made groves. We passed through a grove of good

sized trees. We are on quite an elevation; look down upon Kearney two miles east. It makes a pretty picture with its church spires gilded by the setting sun, and the old Platte about the same distance to the south looks grand by moonlight, a line of silver stretching for miles and miles across the country east and west as far as the eye can reach. . . . The boys felt so settled and at home here in the tent tonight that they thought they would have a game of euchre, but the cards dropped out of sight very sudden [sic] when they were reminded of the day of the week. Its [sic] no wonder they should occasionally forget as there is the same routine for each day, and every day is more or less a day of rest. We get our three meals, wash dishes, and a long spell of rest for men and beast in the middle of the day. Then we take our rides or walks the same as at home on the sabbath. The sheep have the same privilege of eating and walking but combine the two. . . . It was quite a study to arrange for meals when we first set out. We commenced with five meals a day, breakfast middle of the forenoon, then dinner at noon, and a meal or two after that. The boys did not object to such a state of things, as they are always willing to adapt themselves to circumstances when it takes the shape of extra meals, but we cooks and housekeepers took a different view of it, and finally it was settled that George was to arise with the lark or a little before and start the sheep for their days travel while it was cool. That would give Ora and John time for another nap and breakfast which they prepared for themselves, consisting mostly of crackers and coffee. The rest of the family breakfast on the European plan, when and how we like. Then our house and all housekeeping utensils are packed away in Willie's covered wagon, and we are on the move again. We overtake and pass the boys early enough to get settled and dinner ready for the time they have driven their allotted number of miles which is from 4 to 6. We are a united family for the noonday meal, and which is the time for rest and recreation and more or less sleep, and for Grace to revel in her scrubbing and scouring. The tin plates get an extra polish, the cupboard washed and regulated, and all dish and wiping cloths thoroughly washed and dried. Our supper and last meal for the day is usually taken in the tent by lantern light unless it is pleasanter outside. We come to a halt before dark, but it takes time and considerable discussion to decide on a location. George decides in favor of good feed for horses and sheep, and we for our own comfort; but the animals generally carry the day, for we couldn't see them deprived of their greatest enjoyment, eating. The tent has to be put up, and water brought if near a

stream. If not, our supply comes from the barrel that must be kept filled from the streams we pass, which are not numerous and are alkali mostly. We haven't had much trouble about fuel. There is plenty of sage brush which is the best fuel in the mountains with a sprinkling of cedar and pine. We have been able to find and buy old railroad ties through Neb.; for a day or two we were reduced to buffalo chips.

**Monday, October 16th**

It is beautiful autumn weather. George and Willie were in town all day; brought home some of the largest apples and a sack of tomatoes. We had a boiled dinner.

**Tuesday, October 17th**

... There is a good deal of excitement in Kearney over the murder of three officers by horse thieves whom they were trying to arrest.<sup>22</sup>

**Thursday, October 19th**

Mary and I had the pleasure of Mr. Crawford's company to dinner, and I had the pleasure of covering with ashes a pool of tobacco juice left as testimony of his enjoyment. ...

**Friday, October 20th**

4 months ago to-day that we left Aurora; expected to be home again by this time. ...

**Saturday, October 21st**

... Mr. Poage has broke [sic] up camp, and will stay with us over Sunday. F. Albee had gone to Grand Island which means happiness and Lillie. The first breath of Nebraska air wafted sweet peace to his yearning breast, and has been borne on the wings of delightful anticipation ever since.

**Sunday, October 22nd**

... We cooked our goose and had an old fashioned Sunday dinner. Nebraska vegetables are excellent, especially potatoes and winter squash. Our ten quart pan full of squash for dinner speaks for itself. Grace made her baking powder bread into biscuits which with sauce answers for desert [sic]. She makes it in the bake kettle in one large loaf when she bakes it over the campfire. It makes a good toast for breakfast, something we never tried at home. We all prefer it to baker's bread now. George bought a large sack of baker's bread in Salt Lake which lasted through Utah. Then he elected himself bread maker with Grace's assistance as no woman made nicer bread than he did some 30 years ago on the way through to California, but he has lost

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22. Horse thieves killed Sheriff Woods, R. R. Kelly and Charles Collins at Minden, Nebraska. *Cheyenne Daily Leader*, October 18, 1882, 2:3.

his knack, or more likely, it was the keen appetite of youth that sweetened the bread of those days. He was very willing to promote Grace from assistant to principal and so were the rest of us. . . .

### Monday, October 23rd

John took us by surprise this morning although we were looking for him any time now. He enjoyed his trip very much. He says the scenery that we have enjoyed so much is tame compared with that that he has passed through, more especially in Nevada. . . . He was glad to get another look at the old camping places as he went through. He was told at Beartown that the graves that we were so curious to know more about were graves of men killed by Indians. He saw one of the scalpless survivors. John says that the mountains are covered with snow, a fall of 12 inches between Granger and Green River. . . .

### Tuesday, October 24th

I had an ague headache all night. Riding in the hot sun by the river yesterday I suppose caused it. I believe any low sluggish stream will breed ague. I am taking the portrait of the carriage for my plate. While I was at work two gentlemen came to look at it, and I retired into the tent. George has just come from town; says they have bought it to take back to Denver. Mary and I noticed some men examining it pretty thoroughly last night while we were promenading the streets waiting for Grace and her mother, but thought nothing of it as people have shown an interest in it all the way through, especially after learning its history. George ought to take it home as a curiosity . . . [Brigham Young's] family carriage which could seat from 6 to 8 of his wives comfortably, will be an object of interest to everyone. It is like parting with a friend, for it has been so good a home for us all summer. Our dear little Mormon ladies<sup>23</sup> we shall have to leave behind. Billy<sup>24</sup> will be sent home in the spring if he isn't stolen. He came very near it the other night or early morning. Thieves had cut his rope, but he made some fuss which awoke Mr. Poage. He shouted which awoke the sleepers generally. Em answered half asleep, thinking it was John returned; but it had the effect to scare away the thief. . . .

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23. The two white carriage horses bought in Salt Lake City by George J. Squires when he purchased Brigham Young's carriage.

24. The horse Grace rode on the trip. He was bought at the tithing office in Salt Lake City with the brand Z. C. (Zion's Cooperative) on his shoulder.



**Wednesday, October 25th**

The cold wind from the snow covered mountains has just reached here. We have been packing all day; shall take the train in the morning for home, and stop in Iowa to visit Martha.<sup>25</sup> Have finished camp life for this year and perhaps forever. Didn't suppose we should leave it with so much regret. . . . Ora will soon be going home. John and his father will be in town most of the time and full of business. They won't think much about it. They have been used to such trips ever since John was a little boy, but they never had it quite so comfortable before. We are staying at the hotel with them tonight to be ready for an early start. . . . A man stopping here has just been giving us the particulars of the murder of the three sheriffs. He was with them when they were shot. The wife of one of them, a Mrs. Woods from Lincoln, was here boarding when it happened. It is dreadful when we read such things in the papers, but more dreadful to have all the details from an eye witness. . . .

**Friday, October 27th**

We are at Martha's to-night; left Kearney on the 6 o'clock train yesterday. We stopped at Grand Island for breakfast and Fremont for dinner. . . .

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25. Willie's mother, one of the Bent sisters.



Photo by Gibson, Sykes & Fowler, Chicago

**MERRIS CLARK BARROW**  
**("Bill Barlow—The Sagebrush Philosopher")**

# *Merris C. Barrow: Sagebrush Philosopher and Journalist*

By

MARGARET PRINE\*

## PART I

### INTRODUCTION

"There is a certain briskness—yea, peculiar busyness, as it were, about journalism in Wyoming," wrote Merris C. Barrow in 1887.<sup>1</sup> Newspapers then, as now, were powerful in the establishment and development of any community. Often the growth of frontier towns was dependent on the direction in which the town citizens were led by their newspaper, which was usually edited by an intelligent and progressive individual. The journalist of pioneer days in Wyoming was often an energetic, forceful man whose influence grew as his local news sheet reached out to the wider area of his territory or state. Wyoming was fortunate in that this strong force was controlled in early days by men who

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\*Margaret L. Prine, the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. H. A. Bolle, was born in Chicago, Illinois, and came to Cheyenne with her parents in 1934. Mrs. Prine graduated from the Cheyenne High School in 1940. From the University of Wyoming she received her B. A. degree in 1943 and her M. A. in 1948. While a student at the University she was active in numerous campus activities and was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma social sorority.

In 1944 she was married to Elmo L. Prine in Pasadena, California. They are the parents of two sons, and they reside in Laramie, Wyoming, where Mr. Prine is an instructor in the Laramie High School.

While working on her master's degree, Mrs. Prine acted as a graduate assistant in the English Department, where she has since taught as a temporary instructor. Her work on M. C. Barrow was written as her thesis on her M. A. degree.

1. Merris C. Barrow, *Bill Barlow's Budget*, Vol. II, No. 13, August 13, 1887. The files of the *Budget* from 1886 to 1905 in bound form are in the office of the Douglas *Budget*. These bound volumes have recently been given to the University of Wyoming and in time will be housed in its Archives. The bound volumes from 1905 through 1910, when Barrow died, are available in the Wyoming State Historical Department at Cheyenne as well as in Douglas. Since all copies are available in bound form, hereafter in this study quotations from the *Budget* will be documented in the text by a roman numeral for the volume, an arabic numeral for the number of the issue, and the year when the date is not given in the text.

fought for more than their own glory. It is hard to find among the early newsmen one who limited his efforts solely to his own advancement. These "small town purveyors of news" realized that by building up their individual communities and by joining with other communities to try to build a better state their own positions as men of power and importance would be enhanced. Working for a larger, greater goal, they were also working, then, for themselves.

It is not meant to convey the suggestion that prominent Wyoming newsmen of the late nineteenth century were men who amassed fortunes. "Those who attained the greatest fame died without leaving wealth made from their business to dependents."<sup>2</sup> According to one account of early journalists of the state, not a single newspaper man reached the \$100,000 mark, although a number prospered and some accumulated a small amount of money.<sup>3</sup> One man is said to have been in debt when he left the state, another died penniless, still another left his dependents a small competence made from other sources, and M. C. Barrow, who "probably made more ready cash out of his newspaper work than the others, was a spendthrift and left only a small sum to his heirs."<sup>4</sup> The fortune which these men collected, then, was the fortune of being part of a growing and prosperous state which they had helped to build.

With the exception of numerous treatments of Bill Nye, very little has been written about pioneer journalism and journalists in Wyoming. W. E. Chaplin, an early newsman himself who worked from the back room to the editor and owner's desk up front, did some research on early Wyoming newspapers in 1918. These findings he compiled and published in serial form in the Laramie **Boomerang**. Velma Linford in her book **Wyoming Frontier State**, devoted a chapter to pioneer Wyoming newspapers. Douglas C. McMurtrie published an article in 1937, entitled "Pioneer Printing in Wyoming."<sup>5</sup>

From time to time brief mention has been made in articles and in books of these men of the press, individually or as a group, but there are many stories yet to be told. Chaplin in his series described pioneers of the Wyoming press as "men of strong character who dignified their profession."<sup>6</sup>

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2. W. E. Chaplin, "Early Wyoming Newspapers," Laramie **Republican**, Daily Edition, April 11, 1918, University of Wyoming Archives.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. **Annals of Wyoming**, IX, No. 3, Jan., 1937.

6. "Early Wyoming Newspapers," Laramie **Republican**, Daily Edition, April 11, 1918.

In another article of this series, Chaplin wrote, "Among those who ranked high in western journalism and who have passed on may be mentioned without controversy E. A. Slack, J. H. Hayford, Bill (Edgar Wilson) Nye, and Merris C. Barrow."<sup>7</sup>

M. C. Barrow, who is said to have given "national politics a vigorous airing in Wyoming's 'refreshing, sage-scented breezes'," is especially interesting.<sup>8</sup> To tell his story, and hence to show the briskness as well as the power of early Wyoming journalism, is the purpose of this biography.

Merris Barrow, newspaper and magazine editor, was also a leader in his own community and state and left in his columns a history of the country in which he had faith—the sagebrush country of Wyoming. The Sagebrush Philosopher, as he came to be known to people in and out of Wyoming, was a "fluent writer on many subjects"<sup>9</sup> and had a large and colorful vocabulary. Although sometimes his attacks were bitter and his demands strong, there was always a vein of humor for the discerning reader to enjoy. In Barrow's story can be found an illustration of the role of the journalist and the influence of the small-town newspaper in frontier Wyoming.

## THE JOURNALIST'S HERITAGE

A considerable portion of the material that can be collected today on Merris Barrow is difficult to authenticate. Very few of Barrow's own letters and personal papers were preserved, and his newspaper contemporaries as well as most of his friends outside the ranks of the press have died. Available personal recollections, both favorable and unfavorable, have mellowed and ripened perhaps with the years, making their validity questionable. Part of Barrow's story, however, can be taken from existing records of organizations and projects in which he participated and from the columns of his newspaper contemporaries; furthermore, a good many biographical facts and much of his personality can be gleaned from the columns of his own paper.

It is regrettable that some one closer to Barrow and his time did not collect the journalist's personal papers and write a memoir of his activities. Such an account is often

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7. *Ibid.*

8. Velma Linford, *Wyoming Frontier State* (Denver, Colorado: The Old West Publishing Co., 1948), p. 291.

9. Chaplin, "Early Wyoming Newspapers," *Laramie Republican*, Daily Edition, April 16, 1918.

prepared by some one in the family; and, though colored by commemorative reverence, it is valuable to later generations because of the contemporary and more intimate narrative of personal experiences and the accurate dates which it usually includes.

Such a story exists of Robert Clark Barrow, pioneer missionary and father of Merris Barrow. It was recorded by another son, Frank, in a biography which may have been written at the request of the Campbellite church, in which the father served.<sup>1</sup> This book, written shortly after the older Barrow's death, represents the highly eulogistic type of biography, but it does include many valuable facts concerning the man that only a member of the family or a very close associate could know. Since many facts are missing in the early part of Merris Barrow's story, the biography of his father offers numerous suggestions concerning the journalist's home life, early experiences, and possible parental influence which might have shaped his life. For this reason, it seems pertinent to include here some details about the family background and the environment and circumstances which surrounded Merris Barrow's childhood and youth.

Robert Clark Barrow was born in Andes, Delaware county, New York, on August 18, 1832, when the American political scene was undergoing a change under the leadership of Andrew Jackson. It was in the "tumultuous thirties" that the New England Renaissance brought fresh confidence in the individual and stirred many men to think of new adventures for body and mind. R. C. Barrow began his life when men of the eastern United States were dwelling on "romantic speculation with its humanitarian emphasis on the potential excellence of man and the equality of human rights."<sup>2</sup> Born in the East, Robert Barrow was to move west in thought and action as did many others of his time; and moving west, where men were trying to adapt themselves to the hardships of pioneer life, he with his son, who ventured even farther, was a part of the movement which vastly extended American horizons.

Robert Barrow was the third son in a family of five boys and five girls. His mother had been born in Scotland under the surname Maxwell, and his father, William Barrow, had

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1. Frank Barrow, **R. C. Barrow** (Lincoln, Nebraska: State Journal Company Printers, 1892). Facts about R. C. Barrow included in this discussion have been summarized, unless otherwise noted, from this book.

2. Vernon Louis Parrington, **The Mind of New England**, Book Three, **Main Currents in American Thought**, II (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1930), p. 271.

been a native of England. Six years after the birth of Robert, the Barrow family moved west to Union, Tioga county, Pennsylvania, where as Robert grew up he assisted his father in the carpenter trade. Because of this, he, like many other children of that day, was denied the privilege of a common school education until he was well into his teens. From an early age, however, he looked forward to the time when circumstances would permit him to go to school. Meanwhile he learned many things at home from his parents. They probably devoted as much time as they could spare to teaching him, and some incentive was offered, no doubt, by the few books that were usually found in the modest homes of that day. This taste of knowledge made young Robert even more eager to go to school; but until he was sixteen, he continued to assist his father.

Robert's chance to attend school came in 1848 when his grandmother wrote from Delaware, New York, that she would like to have him come and live with her. She promised to let him stay in her home if he would do the little amount of work which needed to be done around the house. Of course, he immediately determined to go, recognizing this as probably his only chance for any formal schooling. After a family consultation it was decided that he should go in the fall. When he left for school in the autumn of 1848, he took with him all his worldly possessions tied in a handkerchief which had been fastened to the end of a stout walking stick. With this over his shoulder, his mother's kiss, and his father's "God-speed," he left his home in Union, Pennsylvania, for what seemed to him a new and exciting adventure in Delaware, New York.

Robert Barrow began his studies immediately after his arrival in Delaware. He paid well for the privilege of three years of schooling, working during vacations to earn enough money for his books and clothes and working all year around for his board and room. These three years in the home of his grandmother were his only ones spent under an instructor; but during the remainder of his life, he continued to study hard. His eagerness and persistence were rewarded, for R. C. Barrow came to be known in later years as a man of great knowledge, even being recognized, according to his son Frank, as a fair scholar of Greek and Latin.

After this short period of formal education, he entered the teaching profession as did many other young men of that day, unprepared but interested and eager. In Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where he taught his first classes, he met Cynthia Harding. They fell in love and later became engaged, but she became ill and died before they could be married. "To forget his grief, he [Robert Barrow] wan-

dered about with no particular object in view but to keep from thinking."<sup>3</sup> His wanderings eventually brought him to Minnesota as a part of an exploring party. Even this exciting adventure did not hold his interest very long, for while in that state he left his fellow explorers to return to teaching school and for several years was the only white man among the Indians of that area. His son Frank wrote that during this time Robert Barrow learned the language of his Indian associates and could converse quite easily with them in their own tongue when he left.

Eventually he tired of life in Minnesota or gave up trying to find peace in a nomadic existence, for he returned to his old home in Union, Pennsylvania. Back with family and friends, he taught school again and evidently overcame his grief and began to think once more of marriage. In the latter part of 1855 in Canton, Pennsylvania, R. C. Barrow was married to Helen Harding, a sister of Cynthia who had died a few years before.

After his marriage he gave up school teaching for what was, no doubt, a more lucrative position on the Erie railroad. With this company in Buffalo, New York, he acted as baggageman until his health failed him and he was compelled to return to Union.

Probably deciding that outdoor life might help him to regain his health, he purchased a piece of land and began farming and clearing timber. He and his wife were very poor and, like many backwoods farmers of the late fifties, they lived through entire winters "on nothing more than corn bread and squash." The Barrows could not even afford to own their own team but had to use one belonging to a more prosperous neighbor. Barrow worked two days for the neighbor for the privilege of using the neighbor's team for just one day. This was a common practice among frontier farmers who had begun with little capital and almost no equipment. Even with equipment, farming was hard in the locality which Barrow had chosen for his home. The area was heavily wooded; and most land, like that which he had purchased, was new ground which had not been farmed before. He had to cut the trees on his land, haul the logs, and pull out the stumps. The enormity of his undertaking can be imagined when it is realized that when Barrow began as a farmer, he cleared a twenty-acre field.

The one diversion in most of the frontier farm communities was the church. The farmer, his wife, and children worked hard all week and for the most part rested and en-

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3. F. Barrow, R. C. Barrow, p. 3.



joyed the activity of their community church on Sundays. The Barrows attended a little chapel in Union. R. C. Barrow's wife, Helen, was a constant attendant; and he, having no particular views on religion, accompanied her to the services out of respect. His wife's "earnest, devoted Christian life, coupled with what he heard at the little chapel soon set him to thinking," said his son in Barrow's biography. Foremost in his thinking was the desire to know whether what the preacher said was so or not. To find out, he would spend hours in reading the Bible after coming home from services. Even with hard work pressing him, he still had the desire of his youth to satisfy, if possible, his thirst for knowledge.

Robert Barrow's eager and open-minded study of the Bible at this time exemplified his approach to learning throughout his life. He did not accept a religious belief, for example, because some one told him of it, but because he had worked the belief out in his own mind. He was natively curious intellectually and had the personal discipline and initiative to make home training profitable.

The Christian gospel unfettered by creeds or human opinions, which he found through Bible study, appealed to him and caused a change to come over his life. According to his son Frank, Barrow came forward at the close of a meeting in the little chapel at Union and made the "good confession."

His careful study of the Bible had prepared him for preaching, a field where there was at the time a great opportunity for service. Joining the ranks of the preacher-farmer group of his day, he preached his first sermon in the little school house "where he had first learned to know, love, and obey the Master." On subsequent Sundays, he preached in the different school houses nearby and later gave himself to full-time ministerial service.

Robert and Helen Barrow's first child was born at Canton, Pennsylvania, on October 4, 1857. The baby, a boy, was named Merris C. In 1857 Robert Barrow was still a man of only twenty-five, who was probably looking into the future and making plans for himself and his family. He may already have been looking to the West, as were many other Americans, to less thickly populated areas. Furthermore, political and economic conditions were disturbingly threatening. In 1857 Taney handed down from the Supreme Court the famous Dred Scott decision. The slavery question was agitating Kansas and other territories. The success of railroads and manufacturers in the early fifties had led to over-expansion. Then the panic of 1857 hit, leaving the country in a state of economic depression.

During Merris Barrow's early years, the tension between North and South grew more critical and reached the breaking point. In the role of leader of this divided nation was Lincoln, a self-educated man, who came from poor and humble parentage, a man whose background was similar to that of Robert Barrow. Lincoln's rise to the presidency seemed the ultimate emergence of the common individual; certainly it gave impetus to the optimistic westward movement of which Merris Barrow and his father were a part.

It is not known whether events arising from the Civil War or merely personal considerations prompted the Barrows to move westward. Sometime in the early sixties they moved from Pennsylvania to Oregon, Holt county, in northwestern Missouri. It is likely that the change of home was made because R. C. Barrow believed Missouri offered opportunity for him as a preacher and a good future for his family.

The experiences of R. C. Barrow from this time forth were related in many of his letters and were preserved in the story written by his son. They show in part the type of life which Merris had as a boy. Robert Barrow had no special church, although he started many in Nebraska across the border from his Missouri home. In December of 1864, for example, it is known that he made a short trip to Nebraska where he preached for three evenings at Omaha and one at Plattsmouth. On these first trips he may have been looking for a suitable place for his family to settle, though too busy with his work to move them. If the Barrows were typical of most missionary families of that day, the activities of the home centered around the father's excursions, with family affairs dependent upon his departures and returns.

It appears that sometime late in 1865, he took his family with him. They may have followed him to the many towns in which he held meetings, or they may have settled in some centrally located town. At any rate, Merris Barrow's early childhood must have been rather upset, and the chances are that he did not have much opportunity to know intimately his father, who was away a great deal or busy evangelizing at home. It seems that the family lived at Brownville for a time and perhaps at London, Nebraska. On the last Sunday night of February, 1866, the Reverend R. C. Barrow began a meeting in the Methodist church at London. He had preached at Brownville in the morning because the Methodists of London had wanted to use their own church. "Upon my return at night," said Robert Barrow in one of

his letters, "I found many more people assembled than could conveniently gain admittance to the house."<sup>4</sup>

A committeeman from the Methodist church met him at the door and politely told him that he would no longer be permitted to preach in the Methodist church or even in the town of London. "It must be proved first that you are not a 'runaway rebel from Missouri'," he said.<sup>5</sup>

This was a common occurrence in those days following the war between the states. Probably it was known generally that the Barrows had spent part of the war years in Missouri, and the suggestion that he had made speeches favoring secession may have been credited by an excited crowd. At any rate the wildest excitement prevailed, according to Robert Barrow's own account, even though some understood the situation.<sup>6</sup> An ex-soldier and friend of Barrow from Nemaha City came to the minister's aid, declaring that he was armed and would protect his misrepresented friend with his own life. Barrow was advised to go to the pulpit and demand a hearing. This he did and gave to the Methodist committeeman letters of commendation from every church in which he had held meetings.

This proof was not even enough to satisfy the man who said, "I do not question your standing in the Christian church; but I have been informed that you made speeches in Missouri in the interest of secession; and until these reports are disproved, the meeting will not be allowed to proceed."<sup>7</sup>

Robert Barrow, nevertheless, determined to hold his audience and continued the meeting. At this point many who did not understand the situation before realized that this was just a plot by a few hostile Methodists to close the meeting. In his letter recounting this experience Barrow maintained, "There was no foundation for the report, except the admitted fact that I lived in Missouri a portion of the time during the war . . . and I requested the committeeman to write to the church and county officers of Missouri for information in regard to my political antecedents."<sup>8</sup> This the Methodist evidently promised to do and the meeting was continued.

Frontier churches in the 1860's were as a rule intensely active, each trying to become stronger than its neighbor.

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4. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

5. *History of Nebraska*, J. Sterling Morton and Albert Watkins, editors (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1918), p. 731.

6. F. Barrow, R. C. Barrow, p. 25.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Young Merris probably heard much effective name-calling during his early years of church attendance. As a journalist, at any rate, he employed the same tactics in denouncing his contemporaries and rivals.

Much of Robert Barrow's work in Nebraska was done without any regular salary. The Board of the Disciples of Christ Church did employ him in 1866, but even then he and his family struggled in poverty because frequently the Board was unable to pay him. In fact, at one time he forgave the Board a debt of \$1,600, a pretty large sum to a man in his position in a frontier state. This poverty in his youth probably contributed to Merris Barrow's determination in later life to succeed financially. It may also have contributed to his trait of free spending. Having been deprived of much in his youth, it would have been natural for him to indulge in extravagance when he had money to do so.

From the Barrow home in Nemaha City in June, 1866, when Merris was just nine years of age, the Reverend R. C. Barrow made his first trip to what was described in his biography as "whiskey-trodden Tecumseh." At the time Tecumseh was a hamlet of only a few houses, and there was no public building in the place. Barrow's first meeting was held in a long shed which was serving as a kitchen. "The first two evenings the kitchen was crowded with curiosity seekers," said Robert Barrow to one of his correspondents.<sup>9</sup> On the third evening a show at a citizen's home offered competition, and Robert Barrow was left without an audience.

The prestige as well as the following of the Reverend R. C. Barrow grew, however. In 1867 the family moved to Tecumseh to make their home. Church services were conducted in the school until 1869, in the court house until 1870, and in a church built by the members by the fall of 1871.<sup>10</sup>

Thus it was as a minister's son in Tecumseh that many of Merris Barrow's habits and attitudes were formed. He, no doubt, had most of his formal schooling in this little Nebraska town. He may have received more education at home under the direction of his school-teaching father, who, in all likelihood, saw that his son was given a thorough background in theology in addition to some familiarity with literature.

Like his father, Merris seems to have been intellectually curious and may have turned from his father's religious teaching because he, as his father had done, wanted to rea-

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9. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

son things out for himself. Too much religious fervor at home may have turned him to the more worldly element of Tecumseh. The religious background is evident in his writing, but he seemed always to be making light of any seriousness which it might involve. Thinking for himself, he set out on a different path from that followed by his father.

## THE YOUNG JOURNALIST

In the little Nebraska town of Tecumseh Merris Barrow began his connection with the journalistic world. As a youth of only nineteen he undertook the job of editing the **Tecumseh Chieftain**. Young Barrow leased this small town paper in 1876 and published it until 1878. Since the early issues of the **Chieftain** are not available, the only known extant file dating from 1880, it is impossible to know whether his flair for personal journalism appeared in this early period. He must have done fairly well financially, however, for he evidently felt able to support a wife in 1877. On March 17 of that year, Barrow was married to Minnie Florence Combs, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elsworth Bond Combs. It is probable, too, that Elizabeth, Merris Barrow's oldest child, was born during the last year of his connection with the Tecumseh paper. Although he considered himself financially able to marry on the income offered by a small town news sheet, the arrival of a child might have caused the Barrows to have some money worries. It is possible that the increased family responsibilities brought about M. C. Barrow's desertion of the newspaper business two years after he entered it.

Sometime in 1878 when Merris Barrow was only twenty-one years of age, he received an appointment as United States postal clerk. His first runs were from Omaha, but during that same year, he was transferred to Wyoming.<sup>1</sup> Although his run there was from Sidney, Nebraska, to Laramie, Wyoming, he and his family made Laramie their home.<sup>2</sup> Merris Barrow continued in the postoffice service until the spring of 1879, when he had an unfortunate experience which terminated this connection.<sup>3</sup>

He was arrested in January, 1879, on a charge of robbing the United States mail. The court records of the charges against Barrow and of the trial have been lost, and Laramie

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1. **Progressive Men of the State of Wyoming** (Chicago, Ill.; A. W. Bowen and Company, 1903), p. 499.

2. W. E. Chaplin, letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

3. *Ibid.*

papers of that time are no longer available. Barrow's personal account, however, was later given in one of his editorials in the **Budget** (I, 19, 1886), and W. E. Chaplin, who was working on the Laramie **Daily Times** in 1879, gave an account of the affair in a letter about Barrow's life written in 1947.<sup>4</sup>

According to Barrow's own report of the incident, he gave bail promptly, three leading citizens of Laramie being his bondsmen (I, 19, 1886): W. H. Holliday, furniture and lumber dealer; J. H. Finfrock, physician, surgeon and first president of the University of Wyoming's Board of Trustees; and James Vine, sheep raiser. For the trial, which was in a Federal Court under Judge Jacob B. Blair, a jury was chosen of leading business and professional men.<sup>5</sup> Only vague and possibly unreliable references to the trial are available today, but it is presumed to have been a fair one and resulted in Barrow's acquittal.

Though Barrow was legally acquitted of guilt, the incident caused him lifelong embarrassment. It continued all through his life to furnish fodder for virulent attacks upon him by rival "newspaporial" contemporaries with whom he was perpetually at war. In 1886 after an especially vicious attack by one of his rivals, Barrow felt it necessary to offer a complete explanation of the affair in the editorial columns of his paper. He asserted that a fellow clerk by the name of Kenniston had framed him in order to cover up irregularities for which Kenniston was responsible (I, 19, 1886). Barrow also maintained that the jury was out less than four minutes and that it had to take only one ballot to declare his innocence of the charge.

The positions which Barrow held immediately after his arrest, during his trial, and after his acquittal certainly suggest that he was regarded with respect by his fellow citizens. Pending the trial after his arrest, the young clerk was hired as a compositor and reporter on the Laramie **Daily Times**.<sup>6</sup> Evidently Barrow's work before his trial showed that he had possibilities as a newsgetter; for immediately after his acquittal, he was given a position as city editor of the **Times** under L. D. Pease, its managing editor, an advancement worthy of note for a relatively new man in the journalistic world.

In 1886 Barrow wrote as if there were nothing about the affair which he wished to conceal or nothing of which he was ashamed. For the majority of people Barrow's expla-

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4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

two and a half columns" by professional rivals jealous of the **Budget**, which Barrow called "the oldest, the largest, and the best," or by other individuals jealous of his political connections.

Perhaps only the urgency of unemployment brought Barrow back into the newspaper field. On the other hand, he might have been awaiting an opportunity to re-enter journalism. Whatever impelled him, his second venture into newspaper work resulted in a lifelong connection with it.

When Barrow became an employee of the **Times**, he, of course, became acquainted with William E. Chaplin, then a compositor on that paper.<sup>7</sup> Here were two of Wyoming's early journalistic "greats" rubbing elbows in the back room of a Laramie daily. Soon these two were to join with another Wyoming "great," Bill Nye. From the **Boomerang**, which was shortly to be founded with Barrow, Chaplin, and Nye as members of the staff, these men would branch out and would contribute much to Wyoming's journalism and government while making their state known over the nation.

During the period that Barrow was with the **Times**, it was a Democratic paper. "The election of 1880 was not at all satisfactory to local Republicans and they decided to establish a paper for the benefit of the party and to give an outlet to the humorous writings of Bill Nye."<sup>8</sup> A meeting was called at the courthouse in Laramie and a temporary organization was perfected. "Judge Jacob B. Blair was one of the chief spokesmen for the new company, but it embraced many of the prominent Republicans of Albany County."<sup>9</sup> One of Laramie's leading grocers, A. S. Peabody, was made president, and Edgar Wilson Nye, who wrote under the name of Bill Nye, was made managing editor. The first issue of the Laramie **Boomerang** came off the press on March 11, 1881, and among those assisting at its "accouchement" was Merris C. Barrow, who in the **Budget** for March 23, 1887, gave a clever and interesting description of the day:

A small room above a boot store, a Washington handpress, on which have just been placed the forms of what constitutes the first number of the Laramie **Daily Boomerang**. Bill Nye—

7. *Ibid.*

8. W. E. Chaplin, **Wyoming Historical Society Miscellanies**, 1919, p. 13.

9. Chaplin, "Early Wyoming Newspapers," **Laramie Republican**, Daily Edition, April 24, 1918.

then, a comparatively unknown man outside of Laramie—stands near, a smile of eager anticipation on his genial phiz and his 'high forehead' shining like a mirror. Beside him Bob Head, the city editor. More Kingsford, Billy Kemmis and myself—"Slug 2," 'slug 3' and 'slug 4'—bring up the rear, interested but not excited. Will Chaplin, the foreman with his hand on the tympan awaits the inking of the forms which is being done by Jimmie Mulhern, the devil, under the immediate supervision of George Garrett, the job printer. The tympan falls with a bang, the bed slides beneath the platen, the devil's-tail plays with a double knock against the press-post, the bed returns to the end of the track, the tympan is raised, and Chaplin, with a smile, hands Nye the first paper. (I,42)

All this took place in the second story of the Kidd building, a rickety frame structure on Laramie's Second Street.

Two months after the initial issue of the Laramie **Boomerang**, Bob Head went on a prolonged spree and was discharged for drunkenness. Later he had to "jump the town to escape prosecution on the charge of attempting to murder his wife." (I, 42, 1887). In the **Wyoming Historical Society Miscellanies** Chaplin described Head as a "newspaper man of rare ability," but he explained further that "John Barleycorn was just too much for him."<sup>10</sup>

After the removal of Head as city editor, M. C. Barrow was promoted from the composing room. "Barrow was talented beyond Head in imagery and was a more fluent writer."<sup>11</sup> When the Laramie **Boomerang** was just a year old, the paper plant was found to be inadequate and was moved to the second story of the Haines livery stable, which was at the southwest corner of Third and Garfield streets. Here the staff had plenty of space, but the odor was a bit oppressive. According to legend, it was here that the grey mule operated the elevator.<sup>12</sup> In ascending to this office, Bill Nye was supposed to have given the advice to "twist the grey mule's tail and take the elevator."<sup>13</sup>

In the winter of 1882-83, when Nye became ill and did not return to his duties with the paper, Barrow took on the additional responsibility of editorial writer. He continued in this capacity until 1884 when, for some reason which cannot today be determined, the management became dissatisfied with Barrow's work and dispensed with his services.<sup>14</sup>

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10. Chaplin, **Wyoming Miscellanies**, 1919, p. 13.

11. Chaplin, "Early Wyoming Newspapers," **Laramie Republican**, Daily Edition, April 24, 1918.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Chaplin, **Wyoming Miscellanies**, 1919, p. 13.

14. Chaplin, letter to author, January 1, 1947.



The last issue of the **Boomerang** under his editorship, which appeared on March 19, 1884, included an editorial comment which might explain his dismissal:

With this issue the writer retires from the position of chief mutilator of truth on this great moral and religious journal. Though not as old in the harness as some of our newspaper brethren, we have experience enough to warrant our remarking right here, that it is a thankless job—that of editing a paper. It is a “demnition grind,” which wears out body and soul. We drop the faber mentally resolving rather than resume it again, to wield a long-handled pitchfork as shorthand writer in some second-class livery stable, or monkey with brake wheels at \$65 per month . . .

To our enemies—for we have enemies—we say “see you later.”<sup>15</sup>

A man who could advance so rapidly in the newspaper world was doubtless very individualistic in addition to being talented, and probably Barrow was being entirely truthful when he referred to enemies. Perhaps he found it hard to fall into line with the ideas which his superiors expected him to express, or he may have trampled on the toes of some important people by making comments about them in his paper. One might even hazard a guess that Barrow was too big for his job, or at least that he thought himself to be and said too much.

Rawlins, Wyoming, a little over one hundred miles west of Laramie, conveniently offered opportunity for a newspaper man in September of 1884, and Barrow went there to take the editorial and business management of the **Wyoming Tribune**, a Republican paper. He was the paper's first editor, and in this capacity, according to one of his successors, “whooped her up plenty, and made the **Wyoming Tribune** a treasure and necessity in scores of homes in and out of old Carbon county.” (**Wyoming Tribune** exchange, **Bill Barlow's Budget** I, 13, 1886). Although Barrow remained with this paper for only eighteen months, he is said to have reached 600 readers, whom he described as “good-natured and patient.” (I, 13, 1886).

Few examples of Barrow's writing on the Rawlins paper are now extant, but those that survive reveal the personal journalism for which Barrow later became widely known. Instead of heading his items of the Territory in a formal manner, he used the more clever headings, “Items of Interest to Wyomingites in Particular and Everyone in General,” “Cattle Chat,” “Short Bits,” etc. In his use of these expressions, Barrow was following the journalistic trend of nation was probably sufficient justification, but the incident was still material for long slanderous editorials, “puffs of

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15. Laramie **Boomerang**, III, 300, March 19, 1884.

his day, but his paper also contained writing flavored with something new.

Some of his expressions were crude and awkward, but they are interesting today as revelations of his experimental attempts at writing in the manner he eventually perfected. In the columns of the **Wyoming Tribune** for September 25, 1884, the only issue of this Rawlins paper available, frequently can be found such expressions as "Not bad, eh?"<sup>16</sup> In speaking of the promising future of Rawlins, Barrow said, "Stick a pin dar!" instead of saying the more conventional "Mark this on the map."<sup>17</sup> A reference to one of his later articles in the Rawlins paper was made in the **Democratic Leader**, a Cheyenne paper, of May 31, 1885. His colorful description of a frontier character of fiction, "Howling Coyote from Poison Creek alias Bob Brown the Inebriated Cowboy," was retold in Barrow's own words. In this account appeared such typical Barrow expressions as "spanked the bosom of his pants," "knocked into a cocked hat," etc.

Of course, since the **Wyoming Tribune** was Republican and the state of Wyoming was predominantly Republican, it might be expected that Barrow's editorials would show indications of Republican sentiment. The material of the following quotation is irrelevant, but the style is revealing in view of the fact that it was an early and crude sample of a manner which later came to be the trademark of Barrow's writing, a highly personalized and vivid style:

The promised shell that was to be thrown into the Republican camp in the form of what was termed the 'mulligan letters,' turned out to be a small tissue paper torpedo that would not explode.<sup>18</sup>

In the columns of the **Wyoming Tribune** for September 25, 1884, can be found numerous other examples of his ability as a free-writing and clever journalist and as a newsgetter. Barrow's paper contained exchanges from other Wyoming papers and notices which championed Rawlins as well as the Territory of Wyoming. He had the following to say of Yellowstone:

There have been 1,725 visitors to our little park—the Yellowstone—the past season. Wyoming is a modest, retiring maiden, but her charms are so many and varied that the boys all run after her.<sup>19</sup>

Barrow was always ready to add to any news item praise for his adopted state. He was quick to notice any new op-

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16. **Wyoming Tribune**, September 25, 1884.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

portunity offered by the state and was just as quick to record and sometimes to commend in his news sheet any new development.

In this same paper there appeared in "Short Bits" an article on a new Wyoming settlement which is interesting because of what it might have meant to Barrow.

The Fort Fetterman military reservation lately opened for settlers is rapidly being taken up by homesteaders.<sup>20</sup>

Probably all of the papers of the state carried similar notices, and some of them went into greater detail in commenting upon the growing population of the state.

As early as December 17, 1872, the Secretary of War had reported to the United States Senate that the "whole of the Fetterman military reservation was no longer needed for military purposes" and could be reduced.<sup>21</sup> The opening of this new land would naturally bring settlers to the country. By 1882 notices were appearing in the Cheyenne **Daily Leader** and in other papers of the Territory declaring that the government would soon give up the post proper.<sup>22</sup> On June 20, 1883, the following notice of the early settlement in the abandoned military post appeared in the **Leader**:

. . . citizens disturbed lately by an order issued by the war department which directs them to quit the reservation. [The citizens were protesting because the buildings had been sold the fall before to their present owners.] These people expected to live in them so long as the reservation was not used by the Government. The people of the neighborhood are also discussing the plan of taking up a town site on the public lands . . .<sup>23</sup>

It is likely that Barrow, who read state papers for his exchange column, saw the article, and he might have begun then to think of Fetterman's possibilities. He kept in touch with what other newspapers of the state printed, and probably read many times of the movement to the Fetterman country. Possibly even as early as 1882, he saw this newly opened land in the light of the opportunity it might offer to him.

Barrow, the newsgetter, was also a "go-getter" in close contact with all the activities of his Territory. He was no doubt following interestedly the movement of a railroad which was coming west, headed for central Wyoming. As early as January 20, 1869, the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad Company was organized under the laws of the state of Nebraska to build a road from Fremont to the western border of the state.<sup>24</sup> Then in December of

20. *Ibid.*

21. Senate Document, No. 14, 3rd Sess., 42nd Cong., 1872-73.

22. Cheyenne **Daily Leader**, May 12, 1882.

23. Cheyenne **Daily Leader**, June 20, 1883.

24. I. S. Bartlett, **History of Wyoming** (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918), I, p. 347.

1869, articles of incorporation for the Wyoming Central Railroad Company were approved in the neighboring territory of Wyoming. Included in these was a declaration that a line would run to or near Fort Fetterman. The articles were filed on May 12, 1875, but nothing actually was done at that time toward constructing the road.

Work on the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad had gone slowly, and it was not until January 20, 1885, that Congress granted the company the right to run through Fort Robinson, a military reservation in northwestern Nebraska.<sup>25</sup> The fact that the proposed railroad to the state line of Nebraska was, then, becoming almost a reality revived enthusiasm and hopes for the Wyoming Central Railroad, and in October, 1885, another association was formed.<sup>26</sup>

The association which was formed in 1885 had been approved during March of 1884 by an act of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Wyoming, but the members of the association did not bind themselves together legally until October nineteenth of the following year.<sup>27</sup> At this time the company was formed to survey, locate, build, construct, and operate a railroad from the eastern boundary of the Territory near the valley of the Running Water River westward along the valley of the North Platte River for one hundred and twenty-five miles. The capital stock of the company was listed as \$2,000,000, and the company planned for their corporation to last fifty years from October 25, 1885.

By March 16, 1886, the trustees of the company resolved to extend the railroad westerly along the valley of the North Platte and Sweetwater Rivers through the counties of Albany, Carbon, Sweetwater, Uintah and on to the eastern boundary of the Utah Territory.<sup>28</sup> During this year, however, both the Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railroad and the Wyoming Central Railroad passed into the hands of the Chicago and Northwestern Company.<sup>29</sup>

Such big railroad talk along with the reports of the rapid settlement of the Fort Fetterman military reservation, which had just recently been opened for homesteaders, probably excited Barrow's interest. Sometime in the spring

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25. *Ibid.*, I, p. 347.

26. *Incorporations, Territory of Wyoming*, II, October 19, 1885, pp. 460-62.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Incorporations, Territory of Wyoming*, III, March 16, 1886, p. 94.

29. Bartlett, I, p. 347.

of 1886, he made his decision to move to the Fetterman region and throw in his lot with developments there. He had probably been awaiting an opportunity to get into business for himself anyway, as were many other settlers on the frontier. Besides, Barrow had taken by this time, according to the Cheyenne **Democratic Leader** of May, 1885, the pen name of Bill Barlow and had made progress in the development of his own style of writing.<sup>30</sup>

He was beginning to make himself known. In July, 1885, for example, the **Democratic Leader** considered his passing through Cheyenne of enough importance to allow several lines of copy to be devoted to him. The item read:

M. C. Barrow, editor of the **Wyoming Tribune**, published at Rawlins, returned from Denver yesterday and an effort was made to induce him to remain over last night, but he said that as there is to be a circus in Rawlins today, it would be love's labor lost to attempt to hold him back with anything less than two circuses here and a bonus. He went on, carrying with him a joyous heart and a large invoice of sympathy.<sup>31</sup>

About this time also Mrs. Barrow conveniently received an inheritance of sufficient size to help appreciably in purchasing a small newspaper plant. Barrow's first self-owned newspaper, **Bill Barlow's Budget**, was well on the way to being born. By June of 1886, it was making its cry heard and beginning to flourish in the new home which the Barrows had established in the Fort Fetterman settlement.

### THE NEW HOME: BIRTH OF THE "BUDGET"

Barrow may have gone to look over his anticipated home in the Fetterman country; but if he did not, he had enough of the pioneer spirit to take a chance on the possibilities it might offer. In his "Chit Chat" column for May 7, 1902, Barrow said that the "newspaporial caravan pulled out of Rawlins early in '86" and headed for the Fetterman country (XVI, 47). This may have been a reference to a direct trip to Fetterman or to a trip via Chicago, where the machinery for the plant was purchased, and Chadron, the point to which it was shipped. At any rate, it is presumed that the Barrows left Rawlins early in the year of 1886 and arrived in the Fetterman country in May of that same year. In Chicago their equipment was purchased from the well-known foundry of Mardeer and Luse (I, 1, 1886) and was shipped by rail to Chadron, which was as far as shipping on the railroad could go. The Barrows picked up or joined

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30. **Democratic Leader**, May 31, 1885.

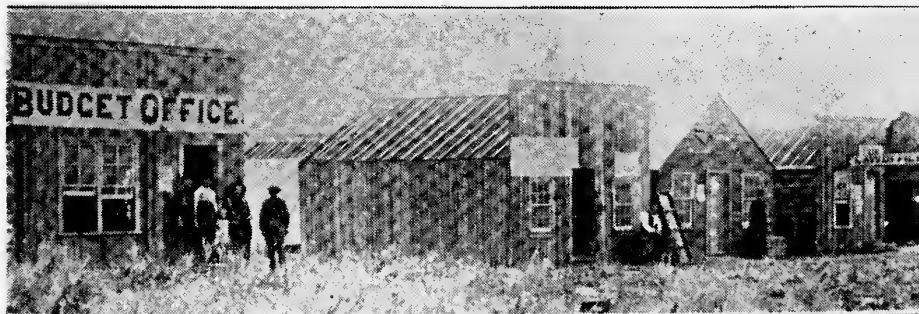
31. **Democratic Leader**, July 14, 1885.

their equipment at Chadron, if they were not traveling with it, and set out for the Fetterman country, their land of opportunity.

With their equipment the Barrows made up a small caravan which, heading west from Chadron, Nebraska, followed a "trail blazed here and there with grader's camps" of the Elkhorn Railroad (XIV, 52, 1900). "The first of three vehicles comprising this caravan carried a printer, his wife and a tow-headed kid and a driver, the others the type and machinery of a nine hundred-dollar newspaper complete in every detail even unto a chattel mortgage representing full two-thirds of the entire layout." (XIV, 52, 1900). Elsewhere Barrow wrote, "Along in the shank of May, the year of our Lord 1886, a somewhat abbreviated newspaper 'plant,' wrapped in a rough-on-rate chattel mortgage blanket, was unloaded from a lightning express mule train at Fetterman, and on June ninth, following, **Bill Barlow's Budget** was born." (V, 52, 1891)

Upon their arrival, the Barrows set up their case racks and presses in a little shack which was later used as a chicken coop. The quarters were inadequate, the atmosphere probably unpleasant and a little discouraging, but the first issue was a success, and the outlook seemed hopeful for **Bill Barlow's Budget** and its owners.

The issue of this paper which was distributed to the people of the Fetterman country on June 9, 1886, was what it was because of teamwork. Barrow probably did all of the writing, but Mrs. Barrow, or "Mrs. Bill" as she came to be known to the readers of the **Budget**, was a thoroughly practical newspaper worker. She was a good type-setter and probably did much of the back-room work from the



**BILL BARLOW'S BUDGET OFFICE, 1886, DOUGLAS, WYOMING**  
Frank Barrow, Mrs. Merris C. Barrow, M. C. Barrow, Sam Slaymaker, and one of Mr. and Mrs. Barrow's daughters are standing in front of the Budget office.

beginning. For that first issue she may have set all or a good bit of the type and may even have helped turn the cylinder press.

Barrow, otherwise "Bill Barlow" or "Editor Bill," and his "better half," another of the titles given Mrs. Barrow by her husband, did have up-to-date, new, and workable equipment. It was only natural that they should have been proud of it and have praised its worth to their future customers. They realized from the first that it was the job-printing which would add to their income that extra amount that would make even small luxuries possible. They had to sell themselves and their equipment from the start. That first issue contained descriptions that made the contents of their wretched shack or office gleam like jewels in a junk heap. Besides the equipment already mentioned, they boasted a fine job press "of an improved pattern" and a "select assortment of job type embracing all the latest faces and styles in plain and ornamental job letters." (I, 1, 1886). "Editor Bill" went to great ends to show that the paper was not a "Catch-penny institution representing ninety percent gall and one of office material" (I, 1, 1886), and he did not spare space in describing it.

By the third week of publication, subscriptions were pouring in. The editor even said that the subscription book was being enlarged—said it in a breezy fashion that was to become typical of the **Budget**. "We have already added a dining room and a summer kitchen to the main structure," he wrote in the third number of his paper, "and the architects are now drawing the plans for an 'L' to be built on the east front embracing a bay window and a big piazza." (I, 3, 1886). He continued, "We can't promise everybody a front room, but we propose to accommodate all comers in some shape at \$3.00 a year, invariably in advance." (I, 3, 1886). This weekly paper also included in its price list an offer of three months for \$1.00, six months for \$1.50 and three hundred years for \$300.00. The latter, typical of Barrow's tone of exaggeration, may have been his bet that this enterprise would succeed.

The Fetterman country, which Barrow had chosen for his new home, had already figured prominently for two or more decades in territorial history. A military post was established in the region on July 19, 1867.<sup>1</sup> According to a report submitted to the United States government in 1874, the fort was located on a plateau or high bluff on the south bank of the North Platte River at the mouth of the

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1. I. S. Bartlett, **History of Wyoming**, I, p. 515.

La Prele Creek about six hundred feet from and one hundred thirty feet above the stream.<sup>2</sup> This report described the location of the fort thus: "The Plateau rises from the river bottom by steep, almost precipitous bluffs, and then, rising gradually merges into the Black Hills, fourteen miles distant."<sup>3</sup> On this bluff overlooking the river, the army laid out a well-built, commodious and convenient military post. Accessible to the fort were a limestone bed on the road to Fort Laramie, a bed of soft, jet black coal near the fort, and a bed of sandstone of a gray color used extensively for building the quarters of the military post.<sup>4</sup> Although high winds were prevalent in the country, with much snow in the winter and frequent hail storms, there was an abundance of game, and in the fertile soil could be grown early vegetables such as peas, onions, radishes, and lettuce.<sup>5</sup> The early fort had sixteen buildings made of adobe, log and plank, some of these being really blocks of buildings. At this time there were also stables inside the high plank fence surrounding the buildings and a hospital, storehouse, and other buildings outside.

Barrow included in the columns of the **Budget** many colorful descriptions of the Fetterman to which he came in 1886 after it had been abandoned by military authorities. But with his special imaginative ability he could also picture Fetterman as it appeared during its military days and as it might appear in the future as a great city, the focal point and crossroads of eastern Wyoming. Such a description appeared in the very first issue of the **Budget**:

Fort Fetterman assumed definite shape as a military reservation in 1867, and for years past the phrase "Fetterman country" has been a synonym for all that section lying within a hundred miles of this point, in either direction. The town is situated on a high bluff overlooking the Platte river, on a mesa extending back a mile or more—a lovely spot, embracing all the qualifications necessary to the natural location of a great city.

... The topography of the country, together with the fact that a fine bridge spans the Platte at this point, makes Fort Fetterman the natural gateway between the extreme southern and northern sections of Wyoming. (I, 1, 1886)

In 1889 a more vivid description of the fort proper appeared in the columns of the **Budget**:

From the first temporary buildings of logs and "doby" it grew into a large post comprising some half-hundred substan-

2. "Report of Asst. Surgeons C. Macklin and F. LeBaron, U.S. Army, Fort Fetterman, Wyoming," **General Surgeon's Report on Army Posts**, Circular No. 4, 1874. Fort Fetterman File, Hebard Collection, University of Wyoming Archives.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*



tial buildings surrounding a parade ground in the center of which stood a fountain. Situated on a high plateau overlooking the Platte, with its system of waterworks, well-kept streets and walks and grassy lawns and parade, it was a beautiful spot, like unto an oasis in the desert, almost. (III, 42, 1889)

A small garrison had been kept at Fort Fetterman until 1878 when the fort was abandoned by order of the Secretary of War since no necessity for a military post in the locality existed.<sup>6</sup> Most of the fort buildings remained when the Barrows arrived in 1886, but by that time they belonged to private individuals. Barrow related in his columns that the buildings were sold in 1882 to civilians and that Fetterman continued to be quite a lively little town. This was especially true in the summer when it became headquarters for cowpunchers after the round-ups.

As soon as the government placed protective forces in the central part of eastern Wyoming, the pioneer began to appear. Most of them, would-be ranchers, homesteaded, but many bought land and built in the Platte valley. Some homesteaders registered only for the usual 160 acres; others got more than one claim by filing a timber, stone, and desert claim besides the regular one. Some of these lands were declared honestly, but many stone claims were filed, for example, when the land was really good.

Many little ranchers flocked to the area hoping to prosper and later to set up substantial homes for their families, but there were big outfits too. Among these were the Searight Brothers, who drove in 14,000 head of cattle from Texas to Casper Creek in 1877. They comprised the group that built the famous old stone ranch house near the Platte River which is remembered as the Goose Egg Ranch.<sup>7</sup> Another big outfit was established by Joseph M. Carey and his brother Davis, who bought a tract of land and started the "CY" ranch which was to become famous for its size.<sup>8</sup>

Barrow explained in his paper, however, that "Wyoming's choicest land" was not open for settlement since the reservation embracing sixty square miles had not been released (I, 1, 1886). This land was not made available until the 52nd Congress met in 1891-92. The Committee on Public Lands submitted at the first session of this Congress a bill proposing to throw open to settlement under the

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6. Bartlett, **History of Wyoming**, I, p. 321.

7. The Goose Egg Ranch was the setting for one of Owen Wister's practical joke stories appearing in **The Virginian**. It was here that the two cowboys were said to have changed the clothes of two babies while their parents danced, the prank not being discovered until the parents reached home some distance away.

8. R. B. David, **Malcolm Campbell, Sheriff** (Casper, Wyoming: Wyomingana, Inc., 1932), p. 70.

Homestead Law the Fort Fetterman hay reservation consisting of 2,620 acres of land.<sup>9</sup>

Since this land had not been released in 1886, the town of Fetterman was subject to removal and "total obliteration at the will of Uncle Sam." (I, 1, 1886). Quite naturally settlers wanted clear titles to the land on which they planned to build "the future metropolis of Wyoming." (I, 1, 1886). Thus it became necessary for the townsite company to look elsewhere for a location.

It was the railroad which brought people to east central Wyoming in considerable numbers, and it was the railroad that kept them from making a permanent settlement at first. Without a safe, sure, speedy and cheap means of communication and transportation to the world outside, the rich and varied resources offered by the Fetterman country would never have been developed. It took the prospect of a railroad to make humanity in numbers recognize the possibilities of the area. It was natural for the early arrivals to head for the place where there already was a community. Fetterman would, therefore, have been the town about which life and activity developed had the railroad not been compelled because of the military reservation to locate the town in another place.

It was customary for a railroad to have a townsite company, which it backed and controlled, to act in selling land for future towns and cities along its line. Such companies may have kept private land-scalping down, but they did not keep the price of property down. The Pioneer Townsite Company was organized in this instance by the Wyoming Central Railroad to handle the selling of land for the new town in the Fetterman country. The actual townsite in east central Wyoming, as in most cases, was kept a secret; but people soon began to settle in the valley along the probable line of the railroad and in the vicinity of Fort Fetterman.

When there was nothing but "rabbits and rattlesnakes" on the present site of Douglas, early comers were opening their businesses in tents at the mouth of Antelope Creek, north of the Douglas of today. C. H. King was the first to pitch his tent there and offer the merchandise of a general store to the people of the surrounding country. It required faith in the future for an individual to set up in the sagebrush country a tent, in which could be bought articles of necessity and convenience that might be found in a real city store. King was not alone for long. Beside his tent was erected another owned by a surveyor named Wattles,

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9. Senate Reports (II, No. 439), 1st Session, 52nd Congress, 1891-92.

and soon a saloon was opened by two enterprising cow-punchers named Blaisdell and Mosley. This settlement, termed the temporary town, was soon a thriving community.

The initial issues of **Bill Barlow's Budget** give to the present-day reader a graphic picture of the development and expansion of this town. According to the second issue the temporary town had only two streets, King and Adams, and about 300 people (I, 2, 1886). In the next issue Editor Barrow declared that a new house was being built every twenty minutes. New arrivals were pouring in every day, and tents and frame buildings were "springing up as if by magic." (I, 3, 1886). Five weeks later, a visitor from Laramie wrote back to Douglas a letter which the **Budget** published. He said that the town had doubled its population in the fifteen days between two of his visits, being 1,000 at the time of his last one. Of this growth he said, "The population is peculiarly western and full of life, energy and grit. What is lacking will be made up by push and vigor." (I, 7, 1886). It is also interesting to note what this visitor had to say of Barrow. "He [Barrow] and his paper take immensely, and he like death 'is no respecter of persons' and will make himself beloved, feared, and felt." (I, 7, 1886).

Meanwhile, most of the arrivals traveled on to Fetterman. As the center of this ranch area and anticipated railroad community, Fetterman during the spring and early summer of 1886 was truly a boom town. At that time this thriving community had three general stores, two hotels, three attorneys, a meat market, a gentleman's furnishing store, a barber shop, a drug and jewelry store, a bank, a restaurant, and several saloons.<sup>10</sup> Although Barrow called his paper the oldest one published in Converse county, a point substantiated by the **Democratic Leader** of Cheyenne since it declared the **Budget** the first paper actually published there,<sup>11</sup> another paper had been distributed in Fetterman at an earlier date. On May 26, 1886, Colonel E. H. Kimball had started a newspaper called the **Rowdy West**.<sup>12</sup>

The town of Fetterman also boasted a doctor, Dr. Amos W. Barber. He was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and had been recommended by the Professor of Operative Surgery of that University.<sup>13</sup> He came to be

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10. Coutant Notes, Fort Fetterman File, Hebard Collection, University of Wyoming Archives.

11. **Democratic Leader**, June 16, 1886.

12. Coutant Notes, Fort Fetterman File.

13. David, **Malcolm Campbell**, p. 81.

head of the Fetterman Hospital Association, a cooperative subscription enterprise organized by cowboys on April 25, 1885.<sup>14</sup> He also developed an extensive and strenuous practice in the region around Fetterman, made many friends, and in later years became governor of the state of Wyoming.

Late in June of 1886 the converted army post had close to one thousand inhabitants. During this month, however, according to an account in the **Budget**, the future Douglas was surveyed and given a name. From this time the number of people to arrive in Fetterman began to fall off, and the number of settlers in the temporary town on Antelope Creek began to increase.

It was in the month of June, 1886, that the magnates of the railroad gave the new Fetterman the name of Douglas. It seems that the settlers themselves wanted the new town, "the future great," called Fetterman, but the United States Post Office Department would not permit the use of that name because the post office of Fort Fetterman was still in existence, and two offices with such similar names would cause confusion (I, 2, 1886). According to the **Democratic Leader**, June 16, 1886, the Northwestern managers in Chicago honored the greatest man their city ever produced, Stephen A. Douglas, by naming the new town Douglas. The **Leader's** article explained that surveyors were laying out twenty-four blocks at that time, but that their work had to be sent to Chicago where the streets would be named and then to Laramie City to be recorded. The Cheyenne newspaper explained further that two or three weeks would still elapse before actual builders could get lots at fixed prices.<sup>15</sup>

During June not only was the town named and its blocks surveyed, but the engineer located the depot in the center of the company's tract. A large area between the depot and the river was reserved for shops, switches and stockyards, and the land between the depot and hills was set apart for the business and residential parts of the town (I, 3, 1886). Lots were sold in July to prospective Douglas residents; however, the railroad would still not permit even a tent stake to be stuck in the land. Since such action was to be prohibited until the actual arrival of the railroad, Douglas grew as a temporary town.

As many as one hundred people arrived in the temporary tent village during the course of one day (I, 4, 1886). Housing and food must have been scarce, making prices exorbi-

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14. "Circular, Fetterman Hospital Association, April 16, 1886," **Coutant Notes**, Fort Fetterman File.

15. **Democratic Leader**, June 16, 1886.

tantly high. The rapidity of the town's growth is recorded in an account of the observance of Douglas's first fourth of July in **Bill Barlow's Budget**, July 7, 1886. Here, according to the **Budget** story, "in a spacious booth of pine boughs, appropriately draped with the stars and stripes, assembled several hundred ladies and gentlemen to listen to appropriate songs and speeches and to assist in a proper observance of that day so dear to the American heart." (I, 5, 1886). Where only a few months before the prairie dog and rabbit "had ruled the roost" and where five weeks before only one house and two tents had stood, was on July 4th a town of no less than six hundred people who represented almost every kind of business (I, 5, 1886).

Within another week the population had increased at least another hundred. By this time there were three hardware stores, three lumber yards, two livery barns, three markets, three general merchandise dealers, three grocery stores, two barber shops, three bakeries, four hotels, eight restaurants, two banks, three drug stores, three land offices, two jewelry stores, three newsstands, three feed stores, two gentlemen's furnishing goods houses, two steam laundries, six lawyers, three doctors, two brick yards, six contractors and builders, three surveyors, one furniture store, one tin shop, two blacksmith shops, one wagon shop, twenty-three saloons, two dance halls and one church (I, 6, 1886)—all in a temporary tent town.

When the graders arrived, practically everyone living on King Street had to move so that the big fill could be made (I, 6, 1886). Part of these people located on Poverty Flat and the rest went to a place called Nicholsville on Piety Hill (I, 6, 1886). Nicholsville was being built on land belonging to F. S. Lusk, whose generosity some of the settlers questioned. They were permitted by him to rent lots there, but these lots rented at the high rate of ten dollars a month (I, 6, 1886). This part of the temporary town which was located on Piety Hill is often referred to as North Douglas, and it seems that most of the new arrivals located there.

In July when so many people were settling in the temporary town, the Barrows continued to maintain their newspaper plant at Fetterman. Barrow, the good newsgetter, had reporters cover areas of the boom country to which he was not able to go. In the temporary towns comprising Douglas he had W. C. Cannon, a newsdealer, to represent him (I, 6, 1886). This man took over many of the responsibilities which would have been hard for the Barrows to handle from their location several miles away. He received and transmitted news and business locals, standing adver-

tisements, and job work. Barrow emphasized in his **Budget** that all work left with Mr. Cannon would receive prompt attention (I, 6, 1886).

At first **Bill Barlow's Budget** was an eight-page paper, but Barrow was making plans for its enlargement as early as July of its first year. In number eight of volume one, he apologized for the paper's not being the ten pages he had promised his readers in the issue of the previous week (I, 8, 1886). A large order of new type and material that should have reached him failed to arrive. Barrow declared that neither he nor the Most High could say when the needed equipment would reach its destination (I, 8, 1886). Living two days journey from a railroad, an editor at the mercy of transportation companies could of course say nothing more definite, but it was said in Barrow's individual style. These early plans of the editor of the **Budget** are significant, however, for they reveal his optimism about the future of his paper and of the embryonic town.

On August 4, 1886, when the **Budget** was just in its third month, the newspaper plant was moved to Douglas (I, 9). Since this move took place before the arrival of the railroad, this second home of **Bill Barlow's Budget** was in the temporary town of North Douglas. Here, the Barrows chose to remain until after the most of the cattle shipments were over or until a substantial building could be erected on the permanent site (I, 10, 1886). On August 8, 1900, Barrow recorded his recollections of this building in North Douglas and included a picture of the building itself.

Reminiscing, Barrow wrote:

Elsewhere in this issue appears a half-tone of the home of the **Budget** in August, 1886. Old-timers will remember the native lumber 'shack' which stood on the hill over beyant the temporary town, for which we paid \$35 a month rent and through which the sand sifted and the rain played h--avoc with type, machinery and job stock. The building is not reproduced here as a hunch to ambitious architects. I merely ran across an old photograph the other day, and fearing that it might be either destroyed or lost, had it immortalized in metal, with this result. A hundred years from now, when Douglas shall have become a rival of Chicago and Mrs. Bill and I are getting out a thirty-two page daily with Sunday trimmin's from a 'steen-story brown stone block, it will serve to illustrate from what small acorns big trees sometimes grow. (XV, 10)

It was a considerable job to move a newspaper plant in those days, and Barrow was rightly proud of the fact that the equipment had been moved without delaying the paper's publication date. Proof of his pride can be found in the first issue after the move when Barrow indulged in a soulful chuckle of self-gratification because the paper came out on time (I, 10, 1886).

The flood of new arrivals in the Fetterman-Douglas area continued unchecked till winter set in. Each day many wagons and stages came to Douglas on the Rock River trail from the town of Rock River 150 miles to the south on the line of the Union Pacific Railroad.

People in those days lived from hand to mouth, but there was a happy-go-lucky atmosphere over the whole population in and around Douglas. The railroad would arrive soon and everyone would move to Douglas proper. City life would begin and prosperity would reign. Bankers, stable managers, grocers, barbers, druggists, lawyers, and saloon keepers, not to mention newsmen, were among those who waited with great anticipation the actual settling of the town.

### COMMUNITY AND NEWSPAPER GET UNDERWAY

By September 15, 1886, the **Budget** recorded that the temporary town had been abandoned and that only two or three buildings were left. An unbroken surface of sagebrush just a little over a week before, Douglas proper had become a thriving town. In September the **Budget** also moved to its new base in Douglas proper. The quarters which the Barrows completed for occupancy were on Third Street. They felt great satisfaction in having enough space in which to work and to know that they would no longer have to don rubber overcoats whenever it should rain (I, 17, 1886).

Barrow was able to portray vividly in his weekly news sheet the building confusion, the bustle, stir, and activity on every side. Homes and business houses, good, substantial frame buildings with ornamental fronts, were in all stages of construction. Most of the fifty-eight buildings taking shape during that first week in September were business houses, and still there were many business men who had not begun to build (I, 14, 1886). A few remained in the temporary town on the Antelope at first, but within a few days most of the stragglers had followed the others to Douglas, and only a very few tents and houses remained in the bottom or on the hill. Most of the people who had owned these temporary structures located them again in Douglas on the rear end of their lots. From these temporary quarters, many merchants carried on operations until their permanent buildings could be constructed. Some people moved into their new places of business before they were completed. The Maverick Bank was one of the first permanent buildings to be erected, but it was not finished until early in December. Other less elaborate buildings

sprang up rapidly. Everyone was hurrying to finish his building, settle down, and make good in a prosperous boom town.

Actually, if the busy new settlers had time to take stock of their new location, they must have found satisfaction in the beauty of the setting. Located on a wide river bottom which included over five thousand acres of land, the town of Douglas really had a magnificent site. There was just enough sand and gravel in the soil to make it pack, and pavements and sidewalks were at first unnecessary (I, 11, 1886). From Douglas Laramie Peak could be seen to the south at a distance of about thirty miles, a peak whose summit seemed to pierce the clouds (I, 11, 1886). North and south of Douglas flowed the Platte, which assured an abundance of water for all purposes. To the west, the Laramie Range stretched into the distance as far as the eye could reach. Barrow described the view west from Douglas as resembling "the ruins of some ancient city." (I, 11, 1886). Here on the summit of a low range of hills, he observed, were massive ledges of white rocks that the hands of time had converted into miniature domes, walls and battlements. In reality these were only the foothills of the rugged mountain range beyond, but in those days when everything about the "future great" was glowing and beautiful, a description such as the one above was not unusual.

Some years later, Barrow recorded a few of the other glories of the country. He had many reasons for liking this western region, especially Douglas; and these reasons were probably shared by all his Douglas associates. On January 30, 1901, he wrote:

That the breezy uplands and the cool mountain valleys of Wyoming afford an ideal summer resort has been an established fact ever since Tige-With-a-Knot-in-His-Tail and his lovely spouse Hole-in-Her-Sock-Sue first drifted in from Nebraska and set up housekeeping in a buffalo-hide tepee, on the banks of the classic Stinking Water. Three hundred and sixty days of God's sunshine; a temperature alike pleasant and healthful and devoid of extremes; balmy breezes laden with the scent of the pines and the life-giving ozone of the sage-brush and the prairie; perfect days and more perfect nights if that were possible, when the stars are as opals in a setting of turquoise and Pale Luna gilds and brings to your feet the mountain peak thirty miles away and you slumber and snore under two comforts and a quilt—what more could fault-finding humanity need or desire? No hot, sweltering, tissue-dissolving and profanity-perspiring days and nights; no cyclone cellars; no weeping skies, no mosquitoes! And our winters have never been as severe as those of the down-east variety, except that an occasional blizzard would sweep down from the north and just simply cork everything and everybody up for a day or a week. This drawback, thanks to the weather clerk up above, has at last been removed. There were but three days during the winter of 1889-90 when the



mercury dropped below zero, and very little snow fell during the entire season, and three days of zero weather is the sum of frigidity for the present winter thus far. Doors are open, and the shirt sleeve goeth about the streets as in July. At this writing I am offering a bounty of one dollar for the scalp and left hind paw of a house-fly which persists in sipping the nectar from my ruby lips and property owners generally are getting their lawn mowers sharpened preparatory to harvesting the blue grass which is springing up on every hand. Who knows but what someday we will wear in truth the some-what misfit title to which we of the Platte valley have long laid claim—the banana belt. (XV, 32, 1901)

Not only was the town growing during the fall of 1886 and the spring of 1887, but **Bill Barlow's Budget** was also improving its plant. Late in the spring, the Barrows received about one thousand pounds of new type and machinery. Included in the machinery was a new paper cutter, which came directly from the manufacturers, and, according to the editor, was "two sizes larger than anything in its line in Central Wyoming." (I, 46, 1887). The paper itself was even expanding, for the forty-sixth number of Volume I comprised twelve pages. Barrow reported that this made it "just twice as large as any paper ever printed in Douglas by either of his contemporaries." He wrote picturesquely of the paper's growth in the final issue of Volume I in June of 1887:

Birthdays, the world over, are occasions of joyousness. In the young it is a mile-stone along the upward and advancing grade, each of which passed brings youth nearer to the land where the ambitious problems are to be solved in exciting, healthful and inspiring contests, with the laurel awaiting the victor. In the aged it is one more mark drawing them nearer to the great goal of life, and, if the young growing up about them are fulfilling the hopes of the parent it is a day filled with serene satisfaction that gives lustre and brightness to thoughts of approaching decay. In a newspaper laboring faithfully for the people a birthday, closing a volume, is always a source of gratification. Its files, a record of the year, are carefully stowed away, and the new copy is placed upon the hook with a feeling of cheerfulness. A new volume is to be opened, a new history to be written. New history, we say, but how like its predecessors—the cradle of yesterday is the tomb of today. The bride of the last volume is the dejected, heartbroken out cast of the coming one. The hot, stifling, bickering warfare of the days past will be repeated; men will rise head and shoulders above their fellows, dazzle the world with their genius and power, and will sink in disgrace and darkness, to be supplanted by others. Yet the close of a volume marks strength and progress, and we herald the new volume with delight. Today marks a period of the **Budget's** life; with this issue closes its first year. Hence this smile, and these lines. (I, 52)

During 1887 and 1888 the **Budget** continued to grow. In September, 1887, an enlargement of the building was taking place. "The carpenters have undisputed possession of these premises just now," said Barrow, "and the mechanical

force have taken a rear pew and sing low." (II, 14, 1887). Later he commented as follows on the building project:

The sound of the hammer and trowel is that sort of music to which distance lends enchantment, but which loses its charms when brought within ten or fifteen inches of the ear. Mr. and Mrs. Bill are fixing up for winter—are doubling their office room, and building a residence. When the improvements now in progress are completed, the **Budget** will brace up and wear tailor-made togs—and lots of 'em—once more. (II, 16, 1887)

During the first two years, **Bill Barlow's Budget** also grew in quality of content. It was always printed on full-size news sheet, although many early papers like the **Rowdy West**<sup>1</sup> were only half that size, the sheets being folded in quarto fashion. Barrow headed his paper with **Bill Barlow's Budget** in bold type script, and at first the sub-heading only included the volume and number. By the end of the first year, however, he began to use a little more ingenuity and included some catchy remarks about the paper in the heading. At the left of a March, 1887, issue, he printed, "The Pioneer Newspaper of the Fetterman Country." In the center of the page Barrow declared that the **Budget** was "Independent in All Things." His comment at the right of the sheet gave a sort of complimentary slap on the back, "Largest Circulation in Douglas and Central Wyoming." By July of the second year, Barrow became even more firm in the policies which he chose for his paper. He changed the center caption to read: "Fair, Faithful, and Fearless." From the first issue the columns had clever leads and were just as cleverly written. Pages 2, 4, 5, and 7 contained "patent innards," as Barrow called syndicated material (II, 35, 1888), but the columns of the other four pages were filled with news about Douglas and its activities.

All was not sunshine and prosperity during that first year in Douglas, however, for disease and weather in many cases clouded the optimism and comfort of its people. As early as the summer of 1886 and on into the fall a disease known among the settlers as mountain fever was proving fatal in both Antelope and Douglas.<sup>2</sup> Although Dr. Barber and others were kept busy day and night, not many knew the proper treatment. The editor of the **Budget** was not exempt from disease, for he wrestled for several weeks with what may have been mountain fever, although he was probably right in calling it typhoid. New settlements were

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1. Two issues of the **Rowdy West** [Douglas, Wyoming], those for June 23, 1886, and for August 8, 1886, are located in the Wyoming State Historical Department, Cheyenne. The issues for October 24, 1886, and July 24, 1887, are located in the Archives Department at the University of Wyoming in the A. R. Kimball Collection.

2. David, **Malcolm Campbell**, p. 122.

almost always crowded and unsanitary, with the occupants giving little thought to health protective measures, and cases of typhoid fever doubtless occurred frequently.

Although with "Mrs. Bill" assisting, the **Budget** appeared as usual, Daniel Prescott who helped with the editorial work said that the paper didn't run so well with the editor-in-chief in bed (I, 23, 1886). After being down for four weeks Barrow could still give a humorous account of his encounter with the "stranger," the term which he gave to the dread disease. The issue for November 24 contained the following record of his illness:

Bill Barlow greets the readers of the **Budget** again, after a month's wrestle with typhoid fever. Ever experience it? Awful! Takes you by the collar and fires you into a furnace; the fever gets higher and higher until you long for a swim in a lake of ice cream and pray for a bath in a blithesome blizzard; finally you lose consciousness altogether and when you awake a day or two later you learn that the fever has 'broke.' Weak—oh so weak! Thin as a Missouri razorback and too tired to turn over in bed. Then they 'diet' you—gruel, beef tea and such like, finally leading up to what other people eat. Two weeks spent in your room acquiring strength, and you venture out with a cane and an overcoat. To Mr. Daniel Prescott, who has filled the editorial chair the past three weeks, I return special thanks; to Dr. Wilson who 'broke' the fever, to Brother Crow, who assisted in various ways, and to the many friends whose acts of kindness aided the well and encouraged the sick, I feel grateful. Bill Barlow never forgets a friend—that's his religion. (I, 25, 1886)

The widespread prevalence of disease, whether mountain fever or typhoid, was only the beginning of trouble. The winter of 1886-87 has become famous in western history because its severity brought ruin to the cattle industry and the open range. Barrow's paper furnishes an intimate, firsthand account of what this destructive period meant to one locality. Winter came early in the month of September, and by the end of November there was a genuine blizzard. "The wind blew a gale, and the air was so filled with flying snow as to at times conceal from view buildings on the opposite side of the street." (I, 24, 1886). Even that early in the season the Wyoming Central railroad was blockaded with snow, and no mail came or was sent out for over a week. One morning the railroad made an attempt to send a train eastward preceded by a snowplow, but the snowplow jumped the track near Shawnee siding, and the train had to return to Douglas (I, 24, 1886). The snow blockade even affected the town's first Thanksgiving celebration. There was not a turkey, chicken, fresh oyster, or bunch of celery in the city. "Twas a queer Thanksgiving dinner," wrote the **Budget's** editor.

The poor cattle had pretty short rations, too, and by November were in a pitiable condition; for not only was the grass covered, but the streams were so full of snow that they really were of no value to the stock. With the December blizzards, many of the weak cattle froze, even those that had found sheltered places in which to huddle together.<sup>3</sup> Finally in January there was a thaw which lasted for only a few days and rendered the whole range slippery and treacherous. This was followed by another severe cold spell.<sup>4</sup> Everything froze again, and grass was put completely out of the cattle's diet. The cattle cut their feet on the ice, and dead steers were piled in every gully. It is said that cattle and even the usually wild antelope roamed the streets of Douglas seeking shelter and so weak that, if they were pushed a little, they fell over from exhaustion and starvation.<sup>5</sup>

In the spring Douglas was again cut off from the outside world. One morning the citizens awakened to find four inches of snow; and with the two inches that had come a few days before and a high wind, the railroad cuts were filled, and again no trains could run (I, 5, 1887). The people of Douglas, many living in tents and very temporary buildings, must really have suffered. The only brick buildings in town were the Maverick Bank and King's Golden Rule Store, while dotted all over the town were poorly built shacks with earthen floors. The severity of the cold can be imagined from Harry Pollard's story of Mrs. Olivereau, the wife of the owner of the La Fayette Restaurant. While standing at the kitchen stove one day preparing a meal, she froze her feet. It is not pleasant to speculate upon how cold it must have been a short distance away from that stove!

The activities of Douglas during that first winter were, of course, conditioned by the weather, but some semblance of normality was maintained. The school board, of which Barrow was a member, had managed to start school in September in the Tabernacle on Third Street, financed by contributions from those of all religions (I, 17, 1886). Though the Tabernacle was merely a tent, it had wooden floors and wooden sides which extended up a little way.<sup>6</sup> The teacher was Cora Rice, contractor Rice's twenty-year old daughter. The school, though poor, was over-crowded, for the Olivereau's daughters, who came in October, were not

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3. David, **Malcolm Campbell**, p. 122.

4. **Ibid.**, p. 122.

5. Harry Pollard, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

6. A. Rice, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

admitted.<sup>7</sup> After a few months the deplorable condition existing in a tent building was too much for the young teacher, and she became ill and died. Meanwhile announcement had been made of a new school which was to be erected on Capitol Hill, but it was not ready for occupancy until December (I, 18, 1886).

Through all the distressing cold weather, social life continued to cheer the citizens of the town. One of these affairs was a rare treat for the pleasure-loving people of Douglas. This was a ball at the Valley House on Christmas Eve. Barrow reported that one hundred and fifty or more ladies and gentlemen attended the fine supper and dance (I, 28, 30, 1886). The evening festivities began and ended with dancing, but a sumptuous supper was held during the course of the evening, and gayety evidently reigned unbounded.

Here mention should be made of the dances which were held in Douglas from the beginning. To these everybody came from town and the surrounding country. The banker danced with the hired girl, and everyone had a good time, although sometimes the evening's affair might cost an individual up to ten or fifteen dollars, depending on how much he ate and how generous he was toward others. These dances began at seven in the evening and lasted until seven the next day. Usually everyone had a midnight snack, and breakfast was served in the morning. Much the same type of dance was held in the homes of ranchers all over the Fetterman country. People would drive their wagons for a whole day to attend a dance, "kick their heels" until dawn, and then make the day's journey home again. At country dances, each family usually brought food instead of contributing money for refreshments. Sometimes, however, the hostess would bake as many as two dozen cakes and pies for her guests. There was always plenty of food, music and fun at these gatherings. Undoubtedly some of this wide-spread hospitality was lost as the town grew because, as might be expected, cliques began to appear; and people became clannish. It is recalled, however, by many who knew Barrow that the editor of the **Budget** always had a greeting for everyone, and continued to find and print what he thought was new and significant.

"The extension of the railroad to the westward in 1887 robbed Douglas of her prestige as central Wyoming's frontier outpost, of much of her western and northern trade and of many of her population."<sup>8</sup> However, those who re-

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7. Mrs. Harry Pollard, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

8. Bill Barlow's **Budget**, Anniversary Edition, 1907, p. 6.

mained, according to Barrow, "had courage and energy and a firm faith in the future."<sup>9</sup> It was this "bunch of boosters" who incorporated the town, put in a water system, planted lawns and trees, built attractive homes, and publicized Douglas as "the best town in the World." **Bill Barlow's Budget**, whether located in Fetterman or in Douglas, was a vital factor in the growth of the community it served, and under its able editor, Merris Barrow, contributed much to local and state affairs and finally won a nation-wide audience.

(To be continued)

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9. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

## *Book Reviews*

**Wyomingana: Two Bibliographies.** By Rose Mary Malone.  
(University of Denver Press, 1950. vii + 66 pp. \$2.00.)

This monograph ably fulfills its declared intention of providing teachers, librarians, and the general public with a useful finding list of books about Wyoming and the western scene.

The first bibliography contains one hundred and eleven selected references published before 1939, identified by the compiler as "better-known or more standard works about the state and its explorers or leaders," and listed with brief bibliographical details and without content annotations. The implied purpose of the first list is to suggest a basic reference shelf of Wyomingana. Such a list is useful chiefly to non-specialists, or rather to those with little information about the usual bibliographical resources. It seems regrettable, therefore, that content annotations have not been included for the titles in this bibliography. Besides supplying helpful guidance where it might be most useful, such annotations would permit the compiler to justify inclusion of some of the titles selected. For example, mention of specific passages or chapters in **Roughing It** which have to do with the Wyoming scene and reference to the turbulent frontier spirit of the whole book would minimize the startling effect of labeling such a well-known "classic" as a book about Wyoming. Some explanation or analysis of the nature of Thwaites' thirty-two volumes, **Early Western Travels**, would be highly useful in identifying, for those unfamiliar with the varied source materials of this important publication, the journals and diaries having some direct bearing on Wyoming.

The first bibliography represents the compiler's own judgment as to the relative importance of the books listed therein, and there is little fault to be found with her choice. But it is difficult to understand the omission of Mercer's **Banditti of the Plains**, which is certainly one of the significant documents of Wyoming history. M. W. Rankin's **Reminiscences of Frontier Days** seems to deserve a place because it supplies unique source material on the settlement of the Snake River valley in the seventies and eighties—a less glamorous, but no less vital era in Wyoming history, than the fur-trading, Indian-fighting days. And to inject a purely personal opinion from the reviewer, a half dozen

poems in T. H. Ferril's **Westering**—"Fort Laramie" and "Something Starting Over" as examples—have more Wyoming flavor than all of Neihardt's "Songs." The whole volume is so well known and widely loved that it has perhaps earned a right to be listed as a basic item of Wyomingana.

The second bibliography is described in the preface as "the more important" of the two and as "a comprehensive annotated bibliography of recent books about Wyoming, that is, books published in the decade 1939-1949." It lists two hundred and forty-four items, with exact titles, full bibliographical details, and content annotations. The compiler twice describes it as a list of "books about Wyoming" and states her chief criterion in selecting the books thus: "they had to deal with Wyoming, chiefly or entirely." Subsequent remarks in the preface amend the terms of her selection by noting that books dealing with Lewis and Clark, ranch life, cowboys, sheep-raising, Indians of the region, and the like, have been included in some instances because they explain Wyoming history and Wyoming folkways. It is unfortunate that such emphasis has been put upon the conditions, "books about Wyoming" and books that "deal with Wyoming, chiefly or entirely." Fewer than half the books in the second bibliography can be forced into such a classification. All of the titles can be justified, however, on the basis of the implied qualification.

Since the second bibliography is purportedly comprehensive, this label invites the suggestion of additions. Some good books on the building and builders of railroads have been omitted. Two recent novels, C. B. Davis' **Temper the Wind** and Jack Schaefer's **Shane**, Olga Arnold's **I'll Meet You in the Lobby**, and Wilson Clough's new volume of poems, **We Borne Along**, are 1949 items which may have appeared after the bibliography took final form. If so, they deserve listing in the first supplement. Wayne Gard's **Frontier Justice** has good chapters on cattle and sheep wars in Wyoming. Neihardt's **Cycle of the West**, including a helpful preface and all five "Songs," provides a useful substitute for the five separate volumes. It might also be suggested that Frank Waters' **The Colorado** is in many respects a far more revealing and sensitively written interpretation of the geographical and cultural environment of the region than Thane's **High Border Country** or Vestal's **The Missouri**.

It is easy for a reviewer to quibble over misleading prefatory intentions and to point out inevitable omissions in a bibliography. It is more difficult, and of course more important, to evaluate its merits. Miss Malone has done a



solid piece of scholarship and made a valuable contribution in compiling her **Wyomingana**. Her search has been patient, painstaking, and fruitful; her comments on content and style exhibit accuracy and discrimination. The promised supplementary lists will be anticipated and encouraged by all who share her interest in western materials and admire her competency in bibliographical research.

RUTH HUDSON

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**Steamboats on the Western Rivers.** By Louis C. Hunter.  
(Harvard University Press, 1949. 684 pp. \$10.00.)

In the pre-railroad era, the steamboat was the principal technological agent in the transformation of the greater part of the vast Mississippi basin from a sparsely settled, rude frontier society to a populous region on the threshold of economic and social maturity. Throughout the second quarter of the nineteenth century the wheels of commerce in this immense region were almost literally paddle wheels. "Without the steamboat the advance of the frontier, the rise of cities, the growth of manufacturing, and the emancipation of an agricultural people from the drab confines of a frontier economy would all have taken place, but they would have been slowed to the tempo of keelboat, flatboat, and canal barge and to the tedious advance of stagecoach and wagon train. The growth of the West and the rise of steamboat transportation were inseparable; they were geared together and each was dependent upon the other. p. 32"

In depicting this phase of the development of the West the author has placed chief emphasis on the economic, social and technological conditions which created the need for, and under which the steamboat was introduced and operated rather than following the usual custom of relating its history primarily in terms of the activities and achievements of the individual inventors associated with its development. In so doing, Mr. Hunter has written a thorough and scholarly account of the history of the steamboat on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Unfortunately for residents of the Trans-Mississippi West, steamboat navigation of the Columbia, Willamette and Sacramento rivers is not mentioned. Except for scattered references to the upper-Missouri river traffic, little attention is devoted to the role

the steamboat played in the economic development of this part of the West.

He traces the introduction, construction and operation, structural evolution and mechanical development of the vessel itself. Considerable attention is devoted to the hull, engines, shafts, boilers, valves, steam pressure gauges and other highly essential factors in effective operation which have been largely overlooked in the traditional accounts of steamboating on western rivers. He describes the techniques of operation and the organization and conduct of steamboat transportation which, during its heyday, was preeminently the field of small-scale individual enterprises. The typical entrepreneur was a small operator; the typical business involved the operation of a single steamboat. The trend toward monopoly so striking in other lines of business activity during the third quarter of the nineteenth century was scarcely perceptible here.

Mr. Hunter pictures the conditions of life, labor and society on the steamboat, describes the growth of competition among the steamboat operators, and between the steamboat interests and the railroads, and discusses the rise, peak and decline of river traffic. He concludes the volume with the triumph of the railroads, the end of the traditional mode of steamboat transportation and the rise of the tow-boat and barge industry.

The extension of railroad lines into the areas formerly monopolized by the river craft spelled the end of the steamboat industry. Older river men were practically unanimous in the conviction that unfair railroad practices, rather than fair and open competition, were to blame for the collapse of river steamboat traffic after the 1850's. The railroads, according to this view, under-cut and eventually eliminated the old-time steamboat interests not only by discrimination, rate-cutting, monopolizing of waterfronts and obstructing river traffic by their bridges, but also by unethical use by rail interests of their greatly superior resources, their influence with political parties and domination of courts and state legislatures.

The author, quite correctly, draws the conclusion that an objective appraisal of all factors involved in the passing of the steamboat must reject this thesis, while in no way implying that the railroads can be exonerated from the foregoing charges. Where railroads supplied frequent, fast, regularly scheduled and reliable service, steamboat operations were slow, uncertain and unreliable. Limited by nature to a short operating season, beset by a variety of natural hindrances and hazards, steamboats were unable to keep pace in the post-Civil War period. Moreover, "steam-

boats were able to play a vital role in the economic life of the West only so long as population, industry, and trade were concentrated along the trunk lines of the river system. The maximum territorial extent of their service was reached for all practical purposes by mid-century. Through their ability to run virtually anywhere and at all seasons railroads freed the West from the narrow geographic bounds within which the agencies of river transportation operated, providing independent access to all parts of the great Mississippi Valley p. 605"—thus terminating the steamboat era on western rivers.

The work is characterized by a high level of scholarship and general excellence. With the exception of the navigable rivers of the Trans-Mississippi West, the author has covered the phases of the subject as carefully and comprehensively as the availability of source material permits and has illustrated the material with numerous drawings, pictures, charts and tables. Although it is primarily a scholar's volume, chapters 5-11 should provide interesting and informative reading for the general public. Societies, associations and students of history interested in the fresh water aspect of western transportation will find it invaluable.

ALTON B. OVIATT

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**The North American Buffalo.** By Franklin Gilbert Roe.  
(University of Toronto Press, 1951. viii + 957 pp.  
\$12.00.)

The complete title of this book, "The North American Buffalo. A Critical Study of the Species in the Wild State," is a very appropriate one because the publication is a very critical treatise of what has been previously written about the North American buffalo. The author presents a vast amount of historical evidence concerning the buffalo from many diverse sources. Since the evidence is so diverse and often times contradictory, Mr. Roe has attempted to appraise the witnesses of the historical evidence which is presented as well as to critically appraise their testimonies and opinions.

The actual historical period of the North American buffalo in its wild state, as far as white man is concerned, is

relatively short in spite of the great numbers which at one time were present on the North American continent. The extirpation of the buffalo from most parts of its pristine range was so rapid that little reliable scientific information was obtained during the time of its greatest abundance. Mr. Roe calls attention to the fact that "The scientific inquirer, instead of being the first in the field, was among the last." Although there was a large number of people who became intimately acquainted with the buffalo as a result of the westward spread of the North American white population and the utilization of the buffalo for sustenance and commercial gain, yet these people were not interested in making and recording accurate observations. Many of these early settlers were practically illiterate and by the time their observations had been passed on by word of mouth to individuals who were interested in the historical aspects of the buffalo they had become distorted, exaggerated, and much of it generally unreliable. Thus it has become necessary to painstakingly search out all available information and to carefully evaluate it in the light of the information which is available. It is my opinion that Mr. Roe has done a most comprehensive job in sorting the wheat from the chaff.

It is pointed out by Roe that there have been "three serious historical generalizers on buffalo." The first of these is Professor Joel A. Allen whose publication entitled "The American Bison, Living and Extinct" was published in 1876. This is among the best of our historical writings concerning the buffalo but it does not include any account of the final slaughter of the buffalo in northern United States and Canada which occurred during the period of 1877 to 1883. Dr. W. T. Hornaday is the next important writer in chronological order whose publication entitled "The Extirpation of the American Bison, with a Sketch of its Discovery and Life History" was published in 1877. Hornaday is referred to by Roe as "—a zoologist of the first order, but a very inferior historian." Earnest Thompson Seton is the third of this group of writers and although he had much wider opportunities to benefit from highly important publications which were produced from the time of Hornaday's (1887) until 1910 when he published his "Life-Histories of Northern Animals" he evidently failed to take advantage of them and is referred to by Roe as "—the most deficient of all."

The writings of these three men (Allen, Hornaday and Seton) are very frequently referred to by Roe throughout

this publication in regard to various historical aspects of the buffalo. Those aspects which are contradictory, questionable or not adequately supported by reliable historical evidence by these earlier writers are critically surveyed by Roe who has made a fruitful attempt to, as nearly as possible, straighten out many of these controversial issues. This has involved, wherever possible, the insertion of the observer's testimony in his own words; the reference to as many contributions as possible on questionable issues; and the precise documentation of all statements which Roe makes. Such documentation and the citing of the numerous references by Roe in an attempt to substantiate his own thinking in the matter is commendable but it doesn't make for enjoyable reading. Most every page is subtended by footnotes which would perhaps become wearisome to the average reader. To the historian and to the biologist, however, such documentation offers a wealth of valuable information and sources from which additional details may be obtained.

This publication should be of considerable interest and value to the biologist since most of it deals with the probable origin and distribution of the buffalo in North America; its general life history and characteristics; agencies which were destructive to the buffalo, other than man; populations which were attained in various parts of the United States and Canada; the controversial matters concerning the migratory behavior of the buffalo; the destruction of the "Southern" and "Northern" herds in the United States and the final elimination of the buffalo in western Canada; and the influence of the buffalo on the Indian.

It should also be of value to the historian since the story of the buffalo also embraces the chronology and historical background of the whiteman as he pushed westward from the Atlantic seaboard across the Great Plains region to the Rocky Mountains of the United States and Canada. A great deal of Indian history within the area of the buffalo range is also incorporated.

The body of this publication embraces 680 pages. This is supplemented by 34 appendices which total 216 pages. The bibliography contains over 400 references and is followed by an excellent index.

REED W. FAUTIN

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**My Sixty Years on the Plains.** By W. T. Hamilton. (Originally published in 1905, now reprinted 1951 by Long's College Book Co., Columbus, Ohio. vi + 244 pp. \$6.00.)

The fascinating tale of a native of Scotland, born on the River Till in the Cheviot Hills, who became one of the fabulous company of "Mountain Men" of the western plains, is told by W. T. Hamilton. The story, in the first person, covers the years from 1840 to 1900, and he was 82 years of age when he wrote of his sixty years on the plains.

The family finally settled in St. Louis after traveling over much of the eastern part of the country. Because the young son of the family, William, had developed ill health, his father arranged for him to become a member of a band of hunters and trappers who were to trap in fur country to the west for a year. The party consisted of eight men, with Bill Williams and Perkins as leaders, both famous mountain men. The young man's father paid a third of the cost of outfitting the band, which gave his son a corresponding interest.

From the time he started with this band of fearless adventurers and seasoned frontiersmen, his life became one episode after another of sheer adventure. Told in his dry style, recounting the bare facts with little embellishment, the stark reality of the tales he recounts impresses the reader more than any story done in a lavish fashion with undue stress on the deeds of himself and his companions.

Under the leadership of Williams and Perkins, both outstanding mountain men, he learned fast, and became adept in the ways of the wilds. To a mountain man, it meant his life to become careless, and Hamilton practiced endlessly with his arms, and in woodcraft, to become self sufficient, and able to pull his weight in the company of mountain men.

That the "Mountain Men" were a breed apart is well understood by all who have learned anything at all about them, and Hamilton brings out in his book just how remarkable they really were. His tales of their prowess show their indomitable courage and resourcefulness. He never ceases to give praise to his friends among the mountain men, whom he admired whole-heartedly.

As the party traveled through the trackless wilderness of the western country, searching out the streams where the beaver could be trapped, they naturally came in contact with Indian tribes along the way, and in a very short time young Hamilton learned the sign talk used universally by Indian tribes. He became very proficient, and was known as the most expert sign talker of any white man, and he

was better than many Indians. He said that this came to him with no effort, and was as much a surprise to him as it was to others. Indians often questioned him about his ability, thinking that he must have been reared by Indians or that maybe he was a half-breed. Throughout his career this ability was of great value to him in his many dealings with Indians.

Among the most interesting and valuable parts of Hamilton's book are his detailed descriptions of important activities of the "Mountain Men." He told of their methods of fighting Indians, and claimed that 50 well armed mountain men could hold off any number of Indians, and made the statement, "I know this to be so."

He gave the method for making the pemmican, the dried meat which was life-giving food on the plains for Indian and hunter alike. He explained many of the customs of the Indian tribes he knew, and gave some wise advice, such as "never let an Indian escape who has once attacked you." Also, he stated that Indians were good losers in games or races. He said that well trained horses, and ability to shoot straight paid off. Also, he claimed that the white hunters were better at dressing skins than the Indians, and that they were better at hand to hand combat, and in fact in any battle. "To kill the chief of an Indian band is to win the battle"; also he made the statement that the Indians could not stand the white man's charge, and he described the methods used by the mountain men.

His tales of the rendezvous of the trappers and mountain men were of interest, because that is one thing everyone has heard about this group of frontiersmen. Also, he gave some interesting information on trading companies operating in the west, and his dealings with them.

Hamilton, early in his career with the western men, decided to cast his lot with them, and wrote to his father to say he would not be home.

He lived the adventurous life of a mountain man, until he retired to open a trading post. He served as an army scout, and became a sheriff and later a deputy U. S. Marshal and came to the aid of U. S. forces when the Sioux went on the Warpath. He returned finally to settle in the valley of the Yellowstone, and made his home in Columbus, Montana. He died in Billings at the age of 86 years, in 1908. His story is well worth while, and it is good reading; it is a picture of a section of our history which is like no other history anywhere in the world.

Eight fine illustrations by Charles M. Russell are included in the book.

MRS. FRANCES SEELY WEBB

Woman's Editor  
Casper **Tribune Herald**

**Back Trailing on Open Range.** By Luke D. Sweetman.  
(Caxton, 1951. 247 pp. \$3.50.)

Luke D. Sweetman, veteran stockman, arrived in Montana in 1885 at the age of eighteen after helping to trail 3000 cattle from Kansas. The LU herd was taken to the range on Little Dry, sixty-five miles north of Miles City, where the northern and southern herds of the outfit were thrown together on the open range. Here the country was covered with nutritious grass and fresh water streams, and after the passing of the buffalo it became a cattle haven.

Prior to 1882 there were few cattle north of the Yellowstone River, but by the end of 1885 the range was well stocked—over stocked some cowmen claimed and "black-balled" new outfits coming in. By 1883 the buffalo were almost gone, to the author's disappointment, although he later fulfilled his wish to take part in a buffalo chase. He mentions the expedition of Dr. Hornaday of the Smithsonian Institute in which buffalo were killed for scientific purposes.

On the open range roundups were held from early spring until late fall. The author took part in these events and gives the reader a good picture of the work and the play of the cowboy. In winter line camps were maintained and the line riders scouted for unbranded calves to brand and kept the cattle thrown back on the winter range. At such times the author indulged in amusements such as making chokecherry jam, shooting antelope, roping a wild cow to get fresh milk, and an occasional card game.

The question "Why do cowboys carry guns?" is answered by Mr. Sweetman, showing that they carried weapons not to shoot up the town, but for such practical purposes as killing a wounded or injured animal, and protecting themselves from wild beasts.

The winter of 1886-87 was a severe one when the killing wind drove everything before it and high snows left the river bottoms literally covered with dead cattle, a loss to cattlemen in many instances of from sixty to ninety percent.



The chinook wind which thaws the snow failed to materialize, and many stockmen were ruined. While the roundup of 1886 was a huge and spectacular affair, after that date they were never elaborate.

The author was clever and knew how to perform the skillful ways of roping and handling broncs. He became a horse dealer after the winter of 1886 and purchased a small bunch of broken horses. With these he struck north to the line of the proposed railroad, later the Great Northern, where he disposed of his stock. He gives a humorous account of how mosquitoes attacked both horses and men when camped on the Little Missouri River.

With his first venture a success he continued in the horse business. His sales took him eastward to Dakota Territory and Minnesota where he sold horses to the new settlers who were breaking up the virgin prairie. He also took some dirt contracts and freighted grain. For a while he was in partnership with Loring B. Rea until the latter's death.

Mr. Sweetman describes a number of outlaw horses he rode and his method of holding a horse down after the horse was "front-footed." In such a maneuver the horse was roped and choked down. Then "if one of the boys was quick enough he could fall on his head, shove a knee against his neck, grab his nose with both hands, turn it upward and hold it there . . ." The reviewer has found that a more efficient and a safer way to hold a horse down is to pull the tail through between the horse's hind legs and out along his side, stand with one knee on the horse's thigh, the other about the end of the short ribs and pull back on the tail with all one's strength. Some horses can kick a person off their heads.

Mr. Sweetman has given many interesting sidelights on Montana's history and has listed names of persons and outfits once prominent in that state. He has here, in spite of the hardships, the outlaw horses and the long-billed mosquitoes, depicted a life that will appeal to most of his readers and especially to those who have ridden the trails and enjoyed similar experiences, as has the reviewer.

A. S. GILLESPIE

Laramie, Wyoming

Back Trailing is a factual story by one who was thoroughly familiar with the range days in Montana. It is well

written and easy reading—the story of a lifetime from cowpuncher to ranch owner.

RUSSELL THORP

Field Representative, American Livestock Ass'n  
Cheyenne, Wyoming

# *Accessions*

to the

## WYOMING STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT

June 1, 1951 to December 31, 1951

### Miscellaneous Gifts

- Buhler, Ernest, Lancaster, Wisconsin—Four pieces of French money.
- Casselman, C. V., Cheyenne, Wyoming—Moro shield; "house wife" kit, laniard rope used to fire cannon and time fuse used to explode mortar shells, all used during Civil War; New Testament removed from dead Southern soldier January 15, 1865.
- Coe, W. R., New York, N. Y.—22 colored prints of early Indian chiefs and early western frontiersmen; autographed portrait of W. R. Coe.
- Converse, Mrs. N. Jesse, Estate, Laramie, Wyoming—16 museum items including parasols, fans, inkwells, combs, rocking chair 100 years old.
- Dobbins, Gertrude Wyoming, Estate, Los Angeles, California—Numerous articles of clothing, silver spoons, pictures, manuscript materials, scrapbooks, clippings and pamphlets.
- Doty, D. D., Freeport, Louisiana—U. S. one cent piece, 1779.
- Fox, W., Lagrange, Wyoming—2 manuscripts dealing with the history of Lagrange.
- Hale, Dorothy, Cheyenne, Wyoming—Sofa cushion with pictures of ships that made a world cruise.
- Hunton, Mrs. E. Deane, Laramie, Wyoming—8 photographs including pictures of Mesdames Warren, Ross, Kendrick, Dawes, Coolidge, Robertson and Eggleston.
- Kenworthy, Bob, Cheyenne, Wyoming—Swedish pipe, 10 rare sea shells, 1 Portuguese and 3 Japanese coins.
- McCreery, Mrs. Alice Richards, Los Angeles, California—W. A. Richards card case; 13 buttons (2 Frontier Days, 1895, 1898, 8 souvenir, 3 Army insignia); back issues of *Annals of Wyoming* and 5th and 6th reports of the Wyoming State Historical Society.
- Peyton, Mrs. Pauline E., Douglas, Wyoming—Minutes of Philharmonic Society of Douglas; membership list of Douglas Music Club, 1922; 2 letters of E. B. Shaffner.
- Roseboom, Jesse, Portland, Oregon—7 pictures of Indian pictographs in Owl Creek Canyon, Wyoming.
- Shingle, Dr. J. D., Cheyenne, Wyoming—Coin silver watch made in 1851; opera coat made from Paisley shawls; hand woven cover made in 1840; shawl made about 1836; program, Wyoming's Welcome to Gen. John J. Pershing, 1920; Wyoming State Tribune, Feb. 19, 1931.
- Strong, Mrs. Madge E., Torrington, Wyoming—Check of John London, post trader at Ft. Laramie, dated Nov. 8, 1883, on M. E. Post & Co.
- Stimpson, J. E., Cheyenne, Wyoming—899 items, chiefly pictures of early Wyoming scenes and people; early programs.

- Thorp, Russell, Cheyenne, Wyoming—J. B. Okie branding iron; hand wrought andirons from late W. A. Richards home on Nowood Creek; flat iron brought to Wyoming by Cicero Avant in 1880's; old time butter bowl presented to Wyoming Stock Growers Ass'n by Mrs. R. E. Holland of Ten Sleep.
- Wadsworth, Mrs. Frank, Lonetree, Wyoming—History and programs of the Wyoming Cowbelles for 1950.

### Books and Pamphlets—Gifts

- Author—**Western Sketches and War Poems** by Richard Brackenbury. 1945.
- Author—**Jackson Hole, How to Discover and Enjoy It** by Josephine C. Fabian. 1951.
- Author—**Cheyenne Looking North** by E. O. Fuller. 1951 (Reprinted from **ANNALS OF WYOMING**).
- Author—**Chipeta** by Perry W. Jenkins. 1950.
- Author—**This is the Sun Dance** by Marie Montabe and Lynn St. Clair.
- Author—**Mother is a Grand Old Name! An American Family Grows Up** by Alice Downey Nelson. 1950.
- Author—**Westport, Gateway to the Early West** by Louis O. Honig. 1950.
- Morgan, Nicholas G.—**Heart Throbs of the West**, Vol. 12, by Kate B. Carter. 1951.
- Richardson, Warren—**Westward America** by Howard R. Driggs. 1942.
- Bretney, H. Clay—**War of the Rebellion, Reports and Correspondence**, Volumes 13, 22, 34, 41. 1893.

### Books—Purchased

- Brayer, H. O.—**Stock Raising in the Northwest 1884**. 1951.
- Coleman, Laurence Vail—**Museum Buildings**. 1950.
- Dahlquist, Laura—**Meet Jim Bridger**. 1948.
- Dunham, Harold H., Editor—**1950 Westerners Brand Book**, Denver Posse. 1951.
- Fischer, Hail—**Author Headings for the Official Publications of the State of Wyoming**. 1951.
- Grant, Bruce—**The Cowboy Encyclopedia**. 1951.
- Hamilton, Charles—**Cry of the Thunderbird**. 1950.
- Honig, Louis O.—**James Bridger, Pathfinder of the West**. 1951.
- McPherren, Ida—**Imprints on Pioneer Trails**. 1950.
- Mumey, Nolie—**Calamity Jane, 1852-1903**. 1950.
- Mumey, Nolie—**1859 Pikes Peak Guide Books (Reprints): S. R. Olmstead; John W. Oliver; Parsons**. 1950 and 1951.
- Mumey, Nolie—**The Black Ram of Dinwoody Creek**. 1951.
- Nelson, Dick J.—**Only a Cow Country**. 1951.
- Parker, Arthur C.—**A Manual for History Museums**. 1935.
- Wood, Dean Earl—**The Old Santa Fe Trail from the Missouri River**. 1951.
- State Historical Society of Colorado—**Index to the Colorado Magazine**, Volumes I to XXV. 1950.
- Calamity Jane** (By Herself). A facsimile.

# *Annals of Wyoming*

Volume 24

July 1952

Number 2



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**THE WYOMING STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT**  
Cheyenne, Wyoming

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# *Annals of Wyoming*

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Courtesy of the Douglas Budget

**DOUGLAS IN 1900**



# *Merris C. Barrow: Sagebrush Philosopher and Journalist*



## PART II

### FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND SOCIAL LIFE

The Barrows were apparently a gifted couple. Both were sociable, personable in appearance, and industrious. They were different, however, in temperament, thus complementing each other.

Merris C. Barrow was a large, good-looking man,<sup>1</sup> and scholarly in appearance.<sup>2</sup> He was shrewd and intelligent, and impressed people as possessing both native wit and education.<sup>3</sup> One of his most striking physical characteristics was his profusion of hair, which he wore a little longer than did the average man of his time and which, as it turned grey, added to his distinguished appearance.<sup>4</sup>

He is remembered as a happy-go-lucky person who liked to mix with people.<sup>5</sup> It is said that he never passed acquaintances or strangers without speaking, a fact which might explain why he was so popular.<sup>6</sup> In any group Barrow was a good talker, but one never knew what he was going to say.<sup>7</sup> He could always tell a good story,<sup>8</sup> whether truthful or fictitious, and, he made a perfect companion.<sup>9</sup> Not only was he able to adapt himself to any crowd or

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1. Mrs. Harvey Allan, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, Oct., 1946.

2. Eli Peterson, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

3. W. K. Wiker, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

4. Ben Steffen, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

5. Charles W. Horr, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

6. Peterson, Interview, March, 1948.

7. Steffen, Interview, March, 1948.

8. T. S. Cook, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

9. Peterson, Interview, March, 1948.

surroundings,<sup>10</sup> but he was a man of wide and varied interests.

He loved horses and had a very good driving team.<sup>11</sup> He must have been a picturesque figure driving his chestnut browns down the street in 1898. He was also fond of dogs. Since he was a hunting enthusiast, he was especially fond of his water spaniel, which was a good hunting dog. The attachment he felt for his pet is reflected in the following passage:

He died the other day, after a residence of more than twelve years among us. He was honest; steadfast and true in his friendships, and his devotion to duty as he saw it. He had many friends whom he never failed to greet during the years he trod our streets, and who will miss him. He has had troubles—who has not?—but they, as he, are of the past. His body wasted away; his eyes grew dim and his step uncertain; he died. A lowly mound neath a willow tree in my garden marks the spot where kind hands laid him away. His name was Dennis. He was a good dog. (XVII, 9, 1902.)\*

Barrow is remembered as a lover of music, especially of the more popular variety. He played the mouth organ, guitar, and banjo himself and liked to join in group singing.<sup>12</sup> It is also said that visiting actors and musicians were often guests in the Barrow home.<sup>13</sup>

Merris Barrow wrote with a flourish, both literally and journalistically, supporting the things in which he believed and opposing strenuously the things he could not accept. Of himself and his own writing he said, "Reasonably truthful, not too lazy, not so homely as might be and never so well pleased with himself as when some democratic imitator of the sometime since deceased Ananias is punching holes in his hide." (XII, January 5, 1898).

He created about himself a sort of legend of mystery, according to some contemporaries, which might have stemmed from some of the peculiarities in which he indulged. For example, anyone sliding into the editor's big chair would have been confronted with the stare of a human skull, occupying a conspicuous place on his desk (III, 15, 1888). On the other side one saw a clock with the hands off, "stopped ninety years ago," with the words, "Time was made for slaves," emblazoned upon the dial (Guest Editor, III, 15, 1888). In the center lay a book which in-

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. A. J. Mokler, Interview, Casper, Wyoming, October, 1946.

\*Quotations from the *Budget* are documented in the text by a roman numeral for the volume, an arabic numeral for the number of the issue, and the year when the date is not given in the text.—Ed.

cluded the names of subscribers. Opposite this and to the right was a "Scalp Book," beneath which dangled at one time the following cards, "The Douglas Advertiser," the "Rowdy West," etc. (Guest Editor, III, 15, 1888).

From this "sanctum sanctorum" (III, 15, 1888) he went home to a wife who had a great deal more patience than her editor husband. She was short, somewhat stout, jolly, full of fun, and prompt, a person with whom one could always have a good time.<sup>14</sup> She was, according to Barrow's own report, a very important part of his life. When a writer of the *Sheridan Post* guessed that Barrow was not a bachelor because he knew too much about women's "make-up" and not a married man or his mind would not run so much in that direction, Barrow answered as follows:

There is a Mrs. Bill. She owns one-half of these premises, real and personal. She is foreman of the *Budget* job rooms; is one of the best newspaper compositors in the territory; is the *Budget's* head book-keeper and cashier, and is a model wife and mother. Even the lazy lunatic who wabbles at the other end of this pencil at this moment is forced to admit that the term "better half" isn't strong enough to describe her many virtues. (II, 12, 1887).

Like her husband she was a hard worker. She helped with the paper, managed a stationery store, and conducted a greenhouse. Yet she also found time to develop her personal interests, for she was a good shot and was known as a chicken fancier.<sup>15</sup> With all this she still managed her home with only a minimum of help.

At first the Barrows lived in the back of the *Budget* office in two or three rooms, but in October, 1890, they let the contract for a \$1,500 residence to be erected at the corner of Center and Fifth Streets (V, 19, 1890). The large greenhouse built by Mrs. Barrow adjoined this residence. Here she offered roses in bloom on April 1, 1891, as well as cabbage and tomato plants (V, April 1, 1891).

In spite of the demands of their social and business life, the Barrows still found time for travel, sometimes together and sometimes separately. The members of the press were usually given passes in those days on all the railroads,<sup>16</sup> and this, of course, made more extensive travel possible for those who were just comfortably situated financially. When the Barrows traveled they always stopped at the best hotels of their day, the Brown Palace in Denver and the Palmer House in Chicago.<sup>17</sup> Here they mingled with

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14. Rice, Interview, March, 1948.

15. Peterson, Interview, March, 1948.

16. Roy Combs, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

17. Mrs. Tom Bulline, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

the wealthy and prominent people of the country. When their paper was but three years old, they were absent several weeks during which time they "did" Chicago and Milwaukee, "the national brewery," enjoyed a run on the lakes as far north as Buffalo, visited relatives in Nebraska, and returned home by way of Denver and broke according to an account in the **Budget** (III, 13, 1888).

One time Mrs. Bill went to a convention without her editor husband. He announced her planned departure in his characteristic way in the **Budget**:

Mrs. Bill has served notice on me that during the next three weeks I must darn—or otherwise as the case may be—my own socks, sew on such suspender-sustainers as may happen to let go and do the thousand-and-one other things which fall to the lot of a good wife in "looking after" a careless, rather absent minded and certainly cantankerous old cuss like you and I. She has "rolled her blankets" and goes to Hot Springs, Arkansas, as a delegate to the National Editorial Association which convenes in that city April 18. (XVI, 44, 1902).

Editor Bill did go to meet her, however, and his notice of this trip in the **Budget** contained typical Bill Barlow philosophy:

Mrs. Bill has returned from Hot Springs, Arkansas, where she went to attend the National Editorial Convention, and I have returned from St. Louis where I went to intercept, corral, halter-break and bring home Mrs. Bill . . . I am from that territory lying west of the Father of Waters and immejetly adjacent to the south line of Iowa, over beyant bleeding Kansas, insofar as financial or material benefits to be derived from shopsessions of this sort; but from a social standpoint they are hot stuff, and should be indulged in by the fraternity as often as opportunity offers and one's wallet will warrant. We are all too prone to hold our individual nose on the grindstone of close application to duty. Life is all we get out of life, anyway—and as Demosthenes casually remarked to his typewriter as he kissed her once more for luck and then quaffed the hemlock highball—we will probably be a long time dead. (XVI, 47, 1902).

There were also many short trips to Denver and Cheyenne, sometimes for business reasons but usually for pleasure. As Barrow said, he felt that he would "probably be a long time dead."

In the Barrow family there were three children. The eldest was a girl named Elizabeth, the next a daughter named Helen May, and the youngest a son, Merris C., Jr. The boy died while the Barrows lived in Rawlins, on November 10, 1884. As might be expected his death as a result of pneumonia was a severe blow to Barrow, who had no doubt made many plans for his son. After the death of his son, Barrow is said to have spent many days just walking by himself in the desolate country surrounding the town of Rawlins.

When the Barrows came to Douglas, the eldest daughter

was left at her Grandfather Barrow's probably to attend school, and never seemed afterward to fit into the household of her parents. In the religious home of her grandparents, she apparently developed attitudes and ideals that did not coincide with the home life of her parents. She did live with them, however, during part of those early days in Douglas and shared in home responsibilities. While she was still very young, she met and married a man by the name of Bert Fay, who taught school after their marriage.<sup>18</sup> Apparently she saw little of her parents afterwards.

Little is known of Lizzie, as Mrs. Fay was called, and references to her in the **Budget** are rare. She returned to Douglas at least once after her marriage, for in the paper of April 30, 1902, Mrs. H. B. Fay of C. P. Diaz, Old Mexico, is mentioned as being a Douglas visitor. It is also known that she spent some time with her Grandmother Barrow at an uncle's home outside of Douglas.

The younger Barrow daughter was, on the other hand, close to her parents and upon her they bestowed great affection and attention. The **Budget** revealed much of Helen May, from a childhood birthday party through college and marriage. Helen was the recipient of many generousities from her parents.

Some of the atmosphere of the Barrow household can be seen in a record of Helen's seventh birthday party in the **Budget**, under date of December 19, 1888. Nineteen little girls assembled at the Barrow home to participate in the "ceremonies," and from the report, the little ladies took possession of the house (III, 29, 1888). No doubt, there were many more such childhood parties, followed by mixed parties when Helen began to take an interest in boys. After high school, there was college for her at the University of Wyoming. The **Budget** recorded many vacation visits during her years at the state university at Laramie; and at the time of her graduation in 1901, Editor Bill devoted a part of his "Chit-Chat" column to a discussion of the accomplishment (XV, 50, 1901). In 1902, Helen married Fred Bracs of Laramie, a college classmate (XVI, January 8, 1902). Her marriage did not seem to diminish the warm parental interest in her, for many subsequent references were made in the **Budget** both to her and to her husband.

As editor of **Bill Barlow's Budget**, Merris Barrow seemed to be a figure remote from the minister's family of which he had been a part, although many of the attitudes ex-

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18. W. K. Wiker and Mrs. Maude Hutchison, Interviews, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

pressed in his paper probably stemmed from his early experience in a rigidly religious home. Perhaps the son did not respond to his father's religious teachings as much as the elder Barrow would have liked; nevertheless, the Reverend R. C. Barrow always manifested interest in his eldest son. Barrow's father and mother came to Douglas for a visit in August, 1889 (IV, 8, 1889). They arrived on a Thursday; the elder Barrow was guest speaker at the Congregational church on the following Sunday evening (IV, 8, 1889); and they left for home on the next Saturday (IV, 9, 1889). No other records exist of this visit, but it is said that the townspeople were charmed and impressed with the Nebraska minister and his wife.

The following June, Merris Barrow left Douglas suddenly in response to a telegram announcing the dangerous illness of his father (V, 1, 1890). Suffering intense pain from dropsy, R. C. Barrow had gone to the mineral springs at Burlington Junction, Missouri. Here he had given up all hope of ever being well.<sup>19</sup> He was considerably cheered by the visit of his son from Douglas, and from the time of Merris' visit he began to improve. Merris had a way of talking, his brother Frank wrote, that would encourage and raise the hopes of any sick person.<sup>20</sup>

When the elder Barrow returned home, however, he exerted himself too much and had a relapse. Thinking a change of air would do him good, he and his wife made a second visit to Wyoming.<sup>21</sup> He seemed to receive much benefit from this trip, but again he refused to take life easy upon his return home, and on December 10, 1890, he died (V, 27, 1890).

Barrow's mother spent much of her time in and around Douglas after her husband's death and visited there during the entire summer of 1899. No doubt she stayed with her son in Douglas some of the time, but some acquaintances believed that she was not too happy there, since she was used to a more religious and much less active life.<sup>22</sup> Probably most of her visits were with her daughter on a ranch near Douglas. This daughter had married E. B. Combs, a brother of Mrs. Merris Barrow. They had come from Nebraska in April, 1896, with a carload of live stock, farm tools, etc., and had located on a ranch on Fetterman Flat (X, April 29, 1896).

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19. F. Barrow, R. C. Barrow, p. 74.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

22. Roy Combs, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

Clot Barrow, the younger brother of the **Budget's** editor, was reputedly intelligent and gifted as a writer, although he could never settle down.<sup>23</sup> He evidently lacked that quality of determination which Merris had acquired from their father. Merris' other brother, Frank, was also for a time a newspaper man. He helped Merris and Minnie Barrow as a printer during their first year in Douglas (I, 40, 1887). Some years later he edited the **Natrona Tribune** in Casper (X, August 4, 1895), and later the **Meeteetse News** (XIX, 52, 1905), then the **Sheridan Post**.<sup>24</sup> However, his writing does not seem to have had the vitality found in his oldest brother's work.<sup>25</sup>

Some of the Barrows' relaxation was found in trips away from civilization. Both were good marksmen and loved to shoot, but Mrs. Barrow did not take out much time for shooting or hunting during the first eight years of their life in Douglas. From the beginning of the **Budget**, however, there were many references to hunting trips made by Barrow himself. One account of August 17, 1887, tells of a party of Douglasites, "Bold, Bad Hunters," who spent four days in the Laramie Mountains, "trying to exterminate the wild game abounding in that area." (II, 11). Judge Sam Slaymaker acted as their official guide and, according to Barrow, was on speaking terms with every canyon, peak and precipice in the entire range. "The party slaughtered young sage chickens and grouse by the thousands; found fresh bear tracks, sighted both elk and antelope, bagged two deer, and had a right royal time throughout." (II, 11). This was only one of many such trips on which tries for big game seem always to have come second to bird hunting.

One account of a duck hunt in Cody, Nebraska, told in third person by the **Budget's** editor, is especially good:

Dr. Jesurun and Bill Barlow went down to Cody, Nebraska, after ducks last Thursday. They took with them some 1,800 rounds of ammunition exclusive of Pringle's Re-Imported Duck Embalming Fluid, and no less than three Saratogas and a half-dozen gunny sacks, in which to ship birds back to Douglas. Every man, woman and child in the town was promised duck soup on their return, and it is even asserted that Joe Hazen and Druggist Steffen each contracted for 150 pounds of feathers, prior to the departure of the mighty hunters.

The boys returned Monday. They brought back the trunks, the ammunition, and the gunny sacks. We might mention, incidentally, that they brought with them a goose, four teal about the size of black birds, and three sure-enough ducks. It is even hinted that these birds were bought of a small boy near Cody

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23. *Ibid.*

24. **Laramie Republican**, XVII, 28, March 7, 1907.

25. Combs, Interview, October, 1946.

who had killed 'em with a club; but affidavits have been filed with the city clerk to the contrary . . . Messrs. Jesurun and Barrow will go down again next fall. (VIII, April 11, 1894).

This report suggested that, since he could speak so lightly of an unsuccessful hunting trip, he loved hunting for more than the glory of a "big shoot." It indicates certainly that he could make a good story out of a relatively uninteresting experience.

Mrs. Barrow's name is listed in the **Budget** as being one of a grouse-hunting party that went out in the fall of 1893 (VIII, 17). She was a hunting companion of her husband's on many subsequent trips. No doubt, it was their love of hunting which made them active members in the Douglas Gun Club,<sup>26</sup> and it is interesting to know that Mrs. Barrow usually rated relatively high in the meets held by this group (IX, 2, 1894), one of the most active of early Douglas clubs.

From the first the Barrows were prominent in the social life of Douglas, which equaled in variety and activity that of any other frontier community. Early in the town's second year, the Douglas Club was organized, a group comprising many of the business and professional men of the town (II, 16, 1887). This club secured and equipped a suite of rooms in the First National Bank Block and provided for a comfortable reading and card room. Barrow, the civic-minded editor, took a leading part in this, too, and was a member of the club's first Executive Committee with Carl Garver, its president, and R. W. Voxburgh (II, 16, 1887).

Together the Barrows always did their part to make any social function of the town a success. They entered wholeheartedly into masque balls, sometime winning awards for their costumes. One report pictures Mrs. Barrow at the leap year "Bal Masque" dressed as a quaint little school girl accompanied by her husband robed as a priest (III, 3, 1888). This dance, along with many other social affairs, was held in the opera house and was sponsored by the Douglas Social Club, a woman's organization. Mrs. Barrow was for a time president of this group (XVI, March 19, 1902).

The Barrows were also active members in the Douglas Whist Club, which several times organized a series of evening contests. At one time Barrow was president of the club (VI, November 25, 1891) and his wife was often listed in the **Budget** as a winner. They played for different prizes; a \$16 banquet lamp was given to Mrs. Barrow at the

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26. Rice, Interview, March, 1948.



end of one series (XII, February 2, 1898), and the Rices as winners received silver spoons during another series.<sup>27</sup> These spoons were engraved with the initials D. W. C. meaning Douglas Whist Club, but jokingly referred to by the club's members as "Don't Work the Cards."<sup>28</sup>

Barrow was apparently a consistent initiator and organizer of all new clubs. The Douglas Wheel Club, for example, was organized in July, 1899, with M. C. Barrow as president (XIV, 10, 1899). According to the **Budget**, committees were named at this first meeting and \$30 was subscribed by the members for a track to be constructed inside the county block at the head of Center Street. The ever-willing editor was on the track committee.

Barrow was also an active Mason, a Knight Templar, and a noble of the Mystic Shrine, and served as Master of the local Masonic lodge in 1899, 1900, and 1901.<sup>29</sup> Then there is correspondence in his copy book for 1906 regarding the charter for an Eastern Star chapter in Douglas, correspondence showing Barrow's good sense in what was probably a touchy situation. In a letter of March 29, 1906, he wrote:

I am not sure that so large a list will be entirely agreeable to the original petitioners; but it seems the only way to avoid ill-feeling so widespread that it promised to affect the proposed chapter but seemed certain to stir up strife in our lodge as well—something to avoid, if possible.<sup>30</sup>

The picture one gets from the files of the **Budget** and, in the main, from interviews with people who knew the Barrows, portrays them as a busy, social-minded couple, participating widely in organized activities and in many forms of private entertainments, and Merris Barrow as a genial, popular, gregarious figure. But there are people in Douglas today who do not wish to express their opinions of Barrow. This circumstance may mean no more than that most people are reluctant to go on record as speaking disparagingly of a "departed" acquaintance. There are plenty of indications, of course, in the **Budget** that Barrow had enemies as well as friends; indeed, there must have been many people who disliked him violently because of his assumption of authority and his acid pen. It is said that he was regarded by some as a person who "lorded it over his fellowmen."<sup>31</sup> One gets an impression in Douglas, not explicitly stated by anyone there, however, that Barrow had a reputation for

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27. Rice, Interview, March, 1948.

28. *Ibid.*

29. **Progressive Men of Wyoming**, p. 500.

30. Letter to Townsend, March 29, 1906, **Copy Book of M. C. Barrow Correspondence**, p. 111.

31. Harvey Allan, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, Oct., 1946.

worldliness and even "wickedness," which shocked some of his more upright neighbors, and that this reputation took shape largely in his later years. It is possible that his arrogance grew with success and that most of the unpleasant personal traits and habits remembered about him developed in the decade before his death.

For example, his reputation as a drinker probably provoked criticism. It is remembered that he liked his whisky and "lickered up" now and then.<sup>32</sup> It is said extenuatingly that he was under considerable strain before his death and began drinking more heavily. This may have been what he himself meant when he told an acquaintance that he was burning the candle at both ends.<sup>33</sup> Most reports indicate that he was only a moderate drinker or at least one who could drink without being visibly affected by it. W. E. Chaplin commented as follows in 1907 in the columns of the *Laramie Republican*, which he edited:

The "Sagebrush Philosopher" was given a royal welcome by the Denver Press club the other day and was admonished not to come to Denver again without giving the boys at least two days' previous notice. It is their desire to do a good many things to "Bill," but they must have a care or they will be in the same position that the Chicago fellows got into when they entertained the man from Douglas—all under the table while he whistled merrily homeward.<sup>34</sup>

In 1947 when Mr. Chaplin, then an octogenarian, was asked to record his memories of Barrow for inclusion in this biography, he wrote a letter in which he apparently tried to judge Barrow fairly both as a journalist and as a man.<sup>35</sup> Though his judgment of Barrow's morals was harsh, he recalled that he had never heard of Barrow's getting drunk. Perhaps the best proof that Barrow was not an habitually excessive drinker lies in the fact that he worked energetically and effectively and produced remarkable results. Of his drinking Barrow himself gave the following humorous account:

The only time your Pastor to the Push was ever laid out cold in his life was in a "dry" town down in Nebraska where you couldn't buy, beg or steal a drop of the vile stuff—and yet Mrs. Bill tells me with tears in her eyes to this day how it took four men and a half-caste coon to bring me home. The fellow with a thirst and the sign right will find it—t'ell with law and license. (XX, 10, 1904)

W. E. Chaplin's attitude toward Barrow perhaps reflects as fair an estimate as one can get of the man. Chaplin

32. Peterson, Interview, March, 1948.

33. Rice, Interview, March, 1948.

34. *Laramie Republican*, XVII, 27, Feb., 1907.

35. Letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

knew Barrow for as long a period as did any person in Wyoming outside Barrow's immediate family. He worked with Barrow intimately in a newspaper office and was his associate for many years in state affairs of various kinds. In accounts published in the **Republican** Chaplin consistently spoke highly of Barrow and defended him against charges of dishonesty.<sup>36</sup> In 1918 when Chaplin wrote a series of articles on pioneer Wyoming journalists for the **Republican**, he praised Barrow's skill and influence as a journalist.<sup>37</sup> In 1947 when Chaplin composed what he perhaps regarded as his final estimate of Merris Barrow, he labored no doubt to be fair to Barrow and at the same time to his own standards of personal morality. He credited Barrow with high abilities as a journalist, but he expressed disapproval of him as a man. It is impossible to tell of course whether Chaplin was at last revealing his lifelong distaste for one facet of Barrow's character or whether he was expressing a judgment that had taken shape with age and a development of different attitudes on his own part. At any rate he made the following strong comment:

Socially Barrow did not stand high. He was quite generally known as a philanderer. He embraced vice in nearly all its hideous forms. Alexander Pope gave vice three degrees, endure, pity and embrace. Barrow cut out the first two. At Douglas he belonged to a small coterie that played poker at each other's homes. He enjoyed going over to Deadwood, where vice was considered a virtue and gambling and prostitution were leading industries.<sup>38</sup>

Whatever Barrow's personal morals may have been, he was a man of many friends, an influential editor, and a tireless worker for local and state enterprises in which he believed. These aspects of his life, which can be verified and described in some detail, are after all those which give his story significance.

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36. Chaplin exonerated Barrow from guilt on the old mail fraud charge in Laramie in 1879 (Letter to Author, Jan. 1, 1947); asserted his competence and honesty at the time when Barrow was dismissed from the Land Office (**Republican**, XXII, 25, Feb. 7, 1907); and wrote the eulogistic obituary signed "A Friend" and published in the **Budget** in 1910. Mr. Chaplin identified himself as the author of the obituary in his letter of Jan. 1, 1947.

37. **Republican**, Daily Edition, "Early Wyoming Newspapers," Laramie, April 24, 1918.

38. Letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947. This interpretation of Chaplin's attitude has been suggested by Dr. Ruth Hudson, who knew Mr. Chaplin and at one time discussed Barrow with him.

## LOCAL LEADER AND OFFICE HOLDER

Each little frontier community had certain essential figures among its citizenry: the contractor to construct the town in a fitting fashion, the operator of the general store to make available for the town's citizens all kinds of important necessities, the blacksmith to keep the horses shod and the wagons in repair, the grocer to ship in necessary food, the banker to handle the money, the saloon keeper to keep it in circulation, and the preacher to supply the necessary spiritual spark. Certainly one of the important figures in the little communities just getting under way all along the frontier was the man of ideas in whose dreams cities were often built and under whose guidance they often systematically materialized. In Douglas a good deal of the enthusiasm and optimism necessary for initiating and pushing the town's development was supplied by Editor Barrow.

One of the most valuable men in any local scene is the one willing to spend time in promoting the little projects which help his community and bring little or no direct honor to him. From the numerous references to such projects in the **Budget**, it seems evident that in this capacity the **Budget's** editor did his share.

Through his newspaper Barrow constantly called to the attention of Douglas citizens the possibility of initiating new and better things. From these records can be gathered a history of the town and its development under the influence of local leaders, among whom Merris C. Barrow must unquestionably be listed as a key figure.

From his early days in Douglas until his death, Barrow supported worthwhile activities in the town which he helped to build. Always he recognized and proclaimed the community's possibilities. Near the end of his second year as editor of the **Budget**, on March 21, 1888, he recorded a militant defense of his town and his paper:

Envy, jealousy and anger may prompt the assertion that Douglas is a dead town: but the **Budget** itself—every issue of it—proves conclusively to the contrary. No "dead town" could support a newspaper as the **Budget** is supported; no "dead town" could long maintain such an establishment. In fact the history of the **Budget**, dating from the hour of its birth, furnishes ample evidence that the town of Douglas is alive, wide-awake, growing and prosperous. The paper has made money from the day of its inception. While two would-be rivals winked out through sheer starvation, the **Budget** prospered . . . Hence I maintain that the **Budget** is a monument erected by the people of Douglas and central Wyoming which stands today as undisputable evidence of their own prosperity. (II, 42)

Here Barrow credited Douglas with the building of the **Budget**. Whether the paper made the town what it was

or whether the town made the paper, Merris Barrow was right in the middle of the development.

Hardly an issue passed without a plea for some community improvement. Probably the first project which Barrow brought before his readers was the town's need for mail service and a post office. A demand for this service appeared in the first issue of the **Budget** followed by an urgent request that everybody sign the petition being circulated (I, 1, 1886). This item appeared before the town of Douglas had even been located, while people were still flocking to Fetterman.

In the second issue of the **Budget**, Barrow made a call for merchants that the town lacked. "The 'new town' has no blacksmith shop, no bank, no shoe shop, no dry goods nor clothing store, no barber nor harness shop." (I, 2). His advertising of this opportunity may have brought results, for a record of the town's merchants at a slightly later date included the business men of this list.

The first fire which occurred in Douglas during June, 1887, suggested to Barrow another project (II, 4). The fire started at 3 a.m. one June morning and completely destroyed in a half hour a small frame structure on north Second Street occupied by a couple of prostitutes. Barrow's immediate call for a fire protection meeting resulted in the appointment of a committee on plans and estimates as to the probable cost of some kind of protection for the new town against fire (II, 8, 1887). By July 27 over \$600 had been subscribed and plans were underway for purchasing fire-fighting equipment (II, 8, 1887).

"Douglas needs a system of water works," cried Barrow in the **Budget** of June 13, 1888 (III, 2). He maintained that the people realized this fact and would carry out the wishes of the city fathers if they would only go ahead and build the system. Barrow must still have had fire protection on his mind, for he applauded the idea of a water system by saying that the necessary extra tax would be saved by the reduction in fire insurance rates given to a town with running water. He spoke of many other things that the water system would bring, mentioning especially trees and lawns which would be made possible (III, 2).

The project for a water system was tabled because of lack of funds and some time elapsed before it was actually undertaken. In the meantime, Barrow's interest in procuring a water system for Douglas had made his awareness of fire hazards more urgent. When the water system failed to materialize, probably it occurred to his practical mind that the next best thing to preventing a fire was insur-

ing against loss in case of fire. So he became an insurance salesman along with his other activities. In November, 1895, the **Budget** was carrying an advertisement for fire insurance. Policies on both ranch and city property would be written by the agent, M. C. Barrow.

Barrow suggested not only the planting of trees and lawns to make his city beautiful but through his columns urged the public to "Clean up!" (III, 3, 1888). He emphasized the importance of keeping the streets and alleys clean by telling his readers that the danger from decaying vegetation and kitchen refuse rotting in the sun could not be estimated. "There is more danger at this time of year than any other," said Barrow in June of 1888 (III, 3). A continuation of his clean-up program was his ardent advocacy in 1901 and 1902 of a sewer system.

Barrow was certainly in close touch with all kinds of progress in his growing community. The **Budget** recorded the closing of the Maverick Bank in January, 1888, and the vindication of its president, the establishment of the town's first ball club the following summer, the organization of a cornet band, the opening of a new saloon, the arrival of a new minister, the planning for the state fair, the opening of a land office, the organization of the town's orchestra, etc.

The editorial concerning the town's orchestra, which appeared in the **Budget** of June 27, 1900, is especially clever and for this reason is included in part for the reader to enjoy:

Douglas has passed another milestone in her onward march toward metropolitan honors; has taken another reef in her back hair, and cultivates a new strut. We have an orchestra. Originally the musical programme attending social functions in these parts comprised the nasal whine of a circle of half-dressed and less-washed Sioux squaws about a primitive tom-tom, to the rhythmic thump of which Jimmie Fewclothes and Knock-Kneed Buffalo did the couche-couche preparatory to hashing the lungs and liver of some luckless captive. True, the air was jerky, the the harmony far fetched and the time most any old measure; but it suited Poor Lo . . . A one-eyed fiddler astride a wagon tongue come upon the scene later, and brawny freighters treaded mazes of a "stag" quadrille or did a jog by the light of a smouldering campfire, and liked it. After him the country fiddler—the self-taught maestro, who didn't know a musical scale from a section of picket fence and who usually rested the bell of his instrument on his knees—but could play "The Irish Washerwoman," "Devil's Dream," etc. . . . But times have changed—likewise the people. A few of the head push have been east, and returned with the two-step and other modern skates, and our children come home from school to spend their vacation and kick because Bill Stubbs plays too fast and by ear and the same old tunes he always did play. Those of us, too, who have dodged the fortieth mile-post and who still hanker after terpsichorean

joys find the time just a shade too lively for starched collars and soft corns—so we've risen to the dignity of an orchestra which plays all the latest music in perfect time, and by note, and well. We'll dispense with the caller next, I presume—that uncrowned king of the oldtime shindig whose "Rope you Heifers and all Chaw Hay," rings in my ears 'till yet—and otherwise conform to social usages of the copper-cent east. Make way there for the spike-tail coat'. Who knows? (XV, 4, 1900)

The columns of Barrow's paper reveal that he watched with enthusiastic interest and lively comments the progress of telephone expansion in his region. These news items are worthy of mention because of what they reveal about Barrow and about the importance of communication in those days when transportation was still very slow. According to an article in the **Budget** of July 31, 1902, the contract was let in Cheyenne for the distribution of 5,000 poles required for the new telephone line from Cheyenne to Douglas (XVI, 8). In this same issue Barrow quoted the company as saying that the line would be completed as far as Douglas that year. By this time the poles had arrived and had been sent to various points along the railroad from which the distribution would occur. The wire had not arrived yet but was expected within a day or two, and then active construction would begin. The company, according to the **Budget's** account, planned to start a large force of men working on the line northward out of Cheyenne and would put on another force at Douglas to work south if the work did not progress rapidly.

By December 4, 1901, the telephone must have arrived. The paper of that date contained a jubilant article concerning this new luxury:

To sit in your office and talk with a friend who is seven hundred and fifty miles away; to recognize his voice and almost smell the aroma of that last clove which his tongue tells you he must have had—it was this experience which served to bring to my notice, the other day, the fact that the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone people had completed their Douglas-Cheyenne extension, and that through the medium of this wonderful twentieth century achievement I was enabled to swap electrified hot air with an acquaintance at Salt Lake. And being assured that I could play the game without limit and free of tolls, I went the rounds and figuratively touched flesh with the boys at Rawlins, Saratoga, Laramie, Denver, Cheyenne and other points where either pencil-pushers or barkeepers have the honor of my acquaintance. It was a pleasant trip. (XVI, 26)

Among the copies of Barrow's letters found in a battered old copy book was discovered an especially revealing one—revealing in the sense that it tells better than any person could the kind of influence wielded by the **Budget's** editor in his community. This letter, written to W. F. McFarland, Esq., Superintendent of the Telegraph Office in

Omaha, Nebraska, concerned the delayed installation of a promised telephone at the depot in Douglas.

Friend McFarland: Why is it that the Northwestern (telegraph department) office cat persists in devouring every appeal sent in from this man's town relative to the urgent necessity for a telephone at the depot. As near as I can get at it, nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine letters have been written by gentlemen comprising Superintendent Vance of the Bell company, local agents and on down the scale to poor me—all of which asserted that a phone at the depot would not only be a great convenience to the public generally but to the railroad company as well—the telephone people meanwhile asserting their willingness to install an instrument as desired and without expense to the railroad for all time—and yet for a year and a half these letters have gone in, only to be swallowed up in the unfathomable whenceness of an unknown what.

Our local telephone exchange has now nearly 100 phones, and the best service obtainable; it is quite a walk down to the depot and in winter a nuisance as well. You were kind enough to say in reply to my last query that somebody or other 'had the matter under advisement.' Did he die? If so, has his successor been named as yet? What t'el'e zemazzer, anyway? Truly!

This chatty bit of correspondence apparently brought prompt results. On March 30, 1904, in the "Telephone Talk" column of the **Budget** reference was made to the installation of a telephone in the depot (XIX, 42). "All red tape difficulties have finally been overcome," (XIX, 42) said Barrow, not revealing his own part in the operation.

Then in February, 1906, Barrow wrote to the superintendent in Wyoming for the Bell Telephone Company, announcing the anticipated addition of a second story to the Barrow block on Third Street over the post office, part of the same unit which housed the **Budget**.<sup>2</sup> He offered the company a floor space of 23 X 28 feet, "exclusive of stairway but including partitions." He explained that this space would be divided into four rooms "with windows, doors, and partitions as desired" by the telephone company. His prospectus even included reference to a "water closet and lavatory; hot water heat day and night, wiring for electric lights . . . rental of thirty dollars per month on a five year lease" with everything to be ready in five weeks. The Bell Telephone Company accepted the offer.

Many activities of early Douglas in which Barrow participated in turn brought recognition to him as a person and involved him actively as a public leader and benefactor. Early in the town's life he was elected to the first school board, on which he served as clerk for two years (I, 15,

1. Letter to W. F. McFarland, Jan. 25, 1904, **Copy Book of M. C. Barrow Correspondence**, p. 32.

2. Letter to A. J. Vance, Feb. 6, 1906, **Copy Book**, p. 109.



1886). With the other two men on the board he chose the teachers and worked for the erection of a \$3,000 brick school building (II, 13, 1886). Late in the summer of 1887 he referred in the **Budget** to this school house, mentioning that it might be erected early in October, although school would begin September 20 in the old **Rowdy West** building (II, 13).

Barrow also engaged actively in the city government of Douglas, working first of all for its establishment, then as one of its officials. In 1887 Douglas was a part of Albany County, of which Laramie was the county seat. It was in Laramie that the resolution to incorporate Douglas was filed on June 8, 1887, although the corporate seal was not adopted until October 22.<sup>3</sup> The first city council, with Carl Garver, the banker, as mayor and M. C. Barrow as clerk, met for the first time on October 19, 1887, and meetings were set for the first Monday of each month with special meetings to be announced twelve hours before they were to be held.<sup>4</sup>

The **Budget**, announcing the first city council, carried an item which suggested that Barrow was proud of his place in the new government of Douglas.

It has got out, somehow, that I have recently risen to the dignity of a public official, and the press gang is spreading the glad tidings with a breezy freedom which has a tendency to swell my head. (II, 20, 1887)

In 1888 a new mayor was elected, but Barrow continued as town clerk. He remained as town clerk after the election of May 16, 1889, although still another mayor was elected. During this last year as clerk, he was also busy as city assessor. On April 17, 1889, he said, "If there is anything wrong with this issue of the **Budget** please charge it to the fact that the editor has been so busily engaged as city assessor the past few days that the paper has been allowed to run itself." (III, 46).

On May 13, 1890, when the fourth city election was held, M. C. Barrow was elected mayor with 125 votes. The first council meeting of his term of office was held on the evening of June 2, 1890. At this time the council set a dog tax of twenty-five cents, and made plans to work for sidewalks on each side of the street from Fourth to Oak, the council deciding that the owners were to lay the walks themselves.

Again foremost among the things discussed during this year was the water works project. Finally the bill regard-

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3. Record Book, City Hall, Douglas, Wyoming.

4. "Rules and Regulations of Town Council," **Minutes of Council Meetings**, City Clerk's office, Douglas, Wyoming.

ing it, which was to have been brought up at the next election, was laid on the table because of lack of funds; however, Barrow and one other member voted to keep the water question on the next election ballot. The tabling of this bill was no doubt a disappointment to Barrow, because he had worked hard to extend the water works and during the year had published many articles on the subject in the columns of the **Budget**.

On May 16, 1891, at a regular council meeting, George Bolln became the new mayor according to the minutes of the council now on file at the Douglas Court House.<sup>5</sup> It has been stated that Barrow was mayor for two successive terms,<sup>6</sup> but the actual city records report otherwise. He was nominated for mayor, however, in 1898 by a caucus which met at the city hall (XII, May 4, 1898). Since he was at the time acting as receiver of the United States Land Office, Barrow could not accept this nomination. He explained his reasons for declining it in the next week's issue of the **Budget** for May 11, 1898:

On advice of Attorney General Van Orsdel and Judge Lacey, of Cheyenne, M. C. Barrow was compelled to decline the office of mayor, to which he was nominated by a mass meeting of our citizens one day last week. They held that under our constitution a United States official could not legally hold any office within the gift of the state, and that his election to one would necessarily vacate the other. A petition was circulated on Saturday nominating J. J. Steffen. (XII, May 11, 1898)

Distances between the scattered populated areas in Wyoming Territory were great in the late 1800's. During his second year as editor of **Bill Barlow's Budget**, however, Barrow began to think of the time when Douglas and the country surrounding it would have a large enough population to warrant the forming of a new county separate from Albany. On the editorial page of the **Budget** of February 18, 1888, appeared the following short but meaningful notice: "County-seat—then water works!" (II, 35).

In Bartlett's **History of Wyoming**, Converse<sup>7</sup> is listed as one of the three counties created by the legislature of 1888 in the passage of an act entitled, "An act making divers appropriations and for other purposes."<sup>8</sup> This act was vetoed by Governor Moonlight but was passed and signed by John A. Riner, President of the Council, and L. D. Pease,

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5. *Ibid.*

6. **Progressive Men of Wyoming**, p. 500.

7. The county was named for A. R. Converse, a pioneering and influential cattleman of the Chugwater and Lance Creek regions. See Eartlett, **History of Wyoming**, p. 515.

8. *Ibid.*

Speaker of the House, on March 9, 1888, over the Governor's objections.<sup>9</sup> The original county of Converse included not only the county that now bears the name but the present county of Niobrara.<sup>10</sup>

The alert editor of the **Budget** "jumped the gun" a little in announcing this bit of news; for although the act was not passed over the Governor's veto until March 9, the paper published the following item on March 7, 1888:

The **Budget** on behalf of the new county of Converse—which, good sirs and gentlemen, is a bright healthy infant and as lusty a youngster as ever sprang from the loins of any legislative power, and who promises great things for the future—bows its acknowledgements, and acknowledges its indebtedness to you for favors rendered. (II, 40)

May 15, 1888, was set as the day for the organization of Converse County (II, 47), when county seat and county officials were to be selected. In his book, **Malcolm Campbell, Sheriff**, Robert David stated that of the 2,172 votes cast Douglas received more than Lusk, the other contestant for the county seat.<sup>11</sup> He did suggest, however, that "several peculiar things happened in the balloting." It is possible that irregularities in voting did occur, since strong measures were often taken in early day elections involving such rabid rivals as Lusk and Douglas.

Although prior to June, 1889, Barrow had not committed himself or his paper as being either Democratic or Republican, from that time forward he labeled the **Budget** as a Republican paper in which policies of the Republican party would be stressed. Because Barrow was receiver of the United States Land Office, he was not free to run for any county office; but he was very active in the Republican party in his county and was often chosen to represent it at the Republican state convention (XVII, July 9, 1902). The Republican was the dominant party in Douglas, as well as in the state, in Barrow's day; and he was justified in saying in 1902 that the "Republicans carried Converse County as usual in the election." (XVII, November 5, 1902).

Although from time to time in local elections, Barrow recommended certain Democrats for office in the non-partisan elections of the town, he was predominantly a Republican and a very strong and powerful one. It is likely that he wielded considerable influence in Republican circles of the state.

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9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. David, **Malcolm Campbell, Sheriff**, p. 130.

Barrow's association with the Republican party may have kept the **Budget** on its feet during lean years when other new sheets were "blinking out." The party was in power in the county almost continuously, and when it selected someone to do county printing, Barrow was invariably chosen. Later because of his connections with the Land Office, Barrow was also able to throw more printing to the **Budget**, and this business brought financial help of considerable importance.

Before the establishment of the United States Land Office in 1890, Douglas had a local land office. An item in the "Personal Intelligence" column of the **Budget** for October 8, 1889, conveyed the impression that Barrow had been receiver of this office for some time and announced his appointment as special disbursing agent for the land department of the district (V, 18, 1889). A few weeks later the Douglas land office was again mentioned in the **Budget** when it moved to new and more commodious quarters in the two Third Street rooms of the First National Bank Building (V, 22, 1890). This Douglas land office was the forerunner of the United States Land Office which was established in 1890.<sup>12</sup> Barrow was appointed the first receiver of the United States Land Office by President Harrison, and in this capacity he had responsibility for the public lands and the money received from them until 1894. When Democratic President Cleveland took office, Barrow, a Republican, naturally was removed.<sup>13</sup> When the Republicans returned to power under President McKinley, Barrow was again appointed receiver in June, 1897 (XII, 2). "As receiver his duties were light, giving ample time for his editorial work."<sup>14</sup> Yet they brought him influence and prestige as well as financial assistance.

The editor of the **Budget** always stood out against land fraud in the columns of his paper and showed his disapproval of large tracts being given to one man. Of course it is sometimes hard to tell whether a newsman is attacking an individual for a specific but hidden motive of some kind or because he sincerely sees something of which he does not approve. It appears, however, that Barrow was consistently sincere in his championship of the little man in his fight against what appeared to be arbitrary assumption of power on the part of those with influence and wealth. For example, though Barrow had supported Joseph M.

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12. *Progressive Men of the State of Wyoming*, p. 500.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 500.

14. W. E. Chaplin, Letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

Carey's candidacy for Congressional Delegate from Wyoming Territory previous to statehood in 1890, he attacked the Carey holdings for applying for too much land in August, 1897 (XII, 11). His articles concerning Carey's land claims appeared in the August 11, 1897, issue of the **Budget** as follows:

Attention is called to Bill Barlow's comments on the proposed Carey selection, appearing on the first and fourth pages of this issue. The **Budget** has never for a moment entertained the idea that Mr. Carey's scheme for gobbling up a goodly portion of the Platte valley would receive the approval of the state board. Under all the circumstances it is a most absurd proposition—a manifest injustice to this section of the state and the people who live in it, and could only hope to succeed through the rank-est sort of favoritism shown a rich man with a "pull" as against those who are not so fortunate. We had taken it for granted that the proposition would simply die a natural death, through the intelligence and honesty of the state board—and we still believe that it will. The artful attempt of Mr. Carey's newspaper, however, to belittle the Casper meeting by calling those who made formal protest "fools;" its labored effort to gloss over the fact that fully one hundred ranchmen went to Casper on that day for that purpose although only a few of them mustered up courage enough to face the inquiry; its whoop-ia style of comment in discussing the question from its own standpoint, and its too-evident desire that the claims of what it is pleased to term the rabble must not be considered until after Mr. Carey has been satisfied—all this has led the editor hereof to rise in his pew and say just a word or two in behalf of the people who are not rich, who have no "pull," and are without daily newspapers through which to bulldoze and mislead the state board. (XII, 11, 1897)

In the next issue Barrow again dealt with the Carey land selection question. Here he employed one of his favorite journalistic tricks by referring first to the friendship between himself and Carey and then denouncing Carey's quest for land. It became habitual with him to preface a derogatory statement about an individual with a declaration of friendship and a reference to his past pleasant relations or friendly feeling for the individual.

The **Budget** has no quarrel with Judge Carey—his newspaper to the contrary notwithstanding. Our relations have always been friendly. This fact, however, has no bearing upon the question as to whether or no he should be given control of over 22,000 acres of state lands, while others equally deserving must go without. The whole proposition resolves itself into a question of equity and the greatest good to the greatest number, to be considered in its broadest meaning and finally determined by a considerable amount of horse sense. Pending that decision by the state board, we would suggest that all those who desire to select and lease state land—whether a part of the Carey tract or elsewhere—make out their applications and send them to Professor Mead, president of the board of control. (XII, 12, 1897)

It is impossible, of course, to estimate the extent of Barrow's influence in persuading his readers to agree with his ideas of what was right and wrong in the public affairs of his day. His success in initiating local enterprises would suggest, however, that his political opinions carried weight with his readers. It is clear that Barrow was a man with such energy, had a faculty for getting both in and out of trouble, and seemingly enjoyed greatly triumphing over his enemies.

Barrow's verbal tussle with Carey over land was probably not the only controversy he had as receiver of the United States Land Office. Many fraudulent dealings grew out of public land transactions all over the West in those days, with the office and the individual land owners vying for the place of dishonor. Some of these affairs became public, charges were made, and definite decisions, whether right or wrong, were handed down as to the guilty party. Many land affairs, however, were kept quiet or never reached the stage of outright charges.

In 1905 it was probably some enemy whom Barrow had incurred as receiver who wrote to the General Land Office in Washington questioning Barrow's qualifications for the office of receiver. In Barrow's answer to the Land Commissioner's communication on the subject he said,

If further evidence be required by the President, the Honorable Secretary of the Interior or yourself touching any feature of this malicious and unwarranted attack I will gladly furnish it, for I have reached that age where I want this whole matter definitely determined and passed upon now for all time.<sup>15</sup>

With this answer Barrow sent many references from friends who wished to vouch for his honesty. In referring to the material he said, "It seems somewhat bulky, and yet in the preparation I refused hundreds of offers from friends who had knowledge of its purpose and wanted to add their mite."<sup>16</sup> To former Governor W. A. Richards, who was then Land Commissioner in Washington, Barrow wrote in 1907:

Everybody on whom our friend Hitchcock gets his eagle eye has troubles of their own, as appears, and I hate to inflict mine on you—although it is good to know that insofar as the Wyoming bunch is concerned he doesn't seem to have gotten away with anything up to the hour of going to press. But—he is the boy we are afraid of, hence this letter and documents herewith—calculated, I presume, to make the old cuss smack his lips

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15. Letter to Commissioner, General Land Office, Washington, D. C., March 15, 1905, *Copy Book*, p. 99.

16. *Ibid.*

in ghoulish glee as having found so illustrious an imitator in our former clerk Robert F. Potter Jr., who has gotten us into trouble.<sup>17</sup>

In an open letter to his readers some time later, Barrow explained that R. F. Potter Jr. had been a clerk in the land office for five years, during which time \$230.00 had been received in fees which never appeared on the records. Most of the items were small and should have been accounted for in a record kept by Potter (XXII, 35, 1907). One failure to record a payment of \$197.30 from George Smith was discovered by Barrow and A. D. Chamberlin, register in the Land Office in Douglas, ten months after it was paid. They dismissed Potter and paid the shortage (XXII, 35, 1907). According to the **Laramie Republican** of February 7, 1907, in a reprint item from the **Casper Tribune**, Potter preferred charges against Barrow after his dismissal. As soon as Barrow heard of the charges, however, he sent for an inspector.<sup>18</sup> Barrow referred to this inspector in his letter to Commissioner Richards and indicated that he expected an unfavorable report in spite of his innocence of any mishandling of funds. He wrote:

Since Inspector Wadsworth came here under your instructions and at our request he has received Potter's formal charges direct from Hitchcock, and I presume will report direct to him instead of to you. In view of this I am sending you herewith copies of Chamberlin's statement and mine, which we ask you to read and retain. These were accompanied by fourteen affidavits as delivered to the Inspector and two of these corroborated—covering many material facts and ALL declaring—from that of Governor Brooks down—that they would not believe Potter under oath. . . . The last page of my sworn statement summarizes the whole matter and shows that outside the moneys in dispute between Potter and the office—which I understand we must now make good but which we insist we did not receive other than to turn it over to him—there is really nothing left on which to base any charge other than implicit confidence in a clerk who took advantage of the confidence to get us into trouble. This, followed by a year and a half in which I am sure there isn't an error—since we have no longer depended upon Potter and have been doing our own work—ought to count for something.

We believe the inspector's report will be against us. He has spent most of his time with Potter, in Potter's office and with Potter's friends. . . . We even get, in a round about way from the "Utes" as Ed Wells calls them—although he is still at work on his report—that he will recommend that Al and I both be fired. In view of this possibility I am sending you this stuff, and am duplicating all of it to Wells also with request that he gets the the senators together and read it to them—including Frank of course—so they will be posted in case the ball does open.

As a matter of fact Chamberlin did expect to resign in a couple of months anyway; but neither of us want to be fired—

17. Letter to W. A. Richards, Jan. 18, 1907, **Copy Book**, p. 119.

18. **Laramie Republican**, XXII, 25, Feb. 7, 1907.

although well aware that Mr. Hitchcock—in default of the scalp of Mr. Warren or yourself, will likely be very glad to get that of any of their friends.<sup>19</sup>

In another letter written the same day, Barrow went over the case with a friend named Ed, presumably the Ed Wells of the previously quoted letter.

... We are depending, however, upon the fact that a "fire" can only come from the president, and only after notice to the senators. We understand, fully, that Hitchcock would like the scalp of anyone known to be their friends—but find comfort in the fact that he doesn't seem to have won many bluffs in that game as yet. Both Al and I realize that "You all" are busy; but I am sending you this whole matter so that you will have everything bearing on it from our standpoint, with requests that you present it to both Mr. Clark and Mr. Warren—surely they can find a couple of hours for us in which to "post up" on the points so that if called upon to discuss it with the president they can do it with a full knowledge of the facts. As you will see, the whole thing hinges on the personality and character of Potter—whether or no God ever so far forgot his obligations to humanity to make such a man. His admissions to the Inspector are enough to damn him—only that after the first day or two the Inspector seems to have thrown in with him . . .

There has been gross carelessness—cured, however, I believe . . . Then there is the political end of it—the whole thing ribbed up by Johnny Williams and Billy Irvine.

I need not tell you that everybody in town damns Potter—really he hasn't a friend left outside of these two men. Even my political enemies say it an outrage, and for the life of me, I don't see how Potter is to get his flour from this on.

Study this stuff, arrange the affidavits, and then ask the senators and Mondell to give you a couple of hours and lay the case before them so they will be "loaded" when it comes up . . . Al as you know intends to resign in a month or so, and Wheeler will succeed him. I want to serve out my term, and then anyone can have the place. To get fired would not only humiliate me, but it would strengthen the hands of the Utes in many ways as you understand, and neither of us want that.<sup>20</sup>

Though often bitterly attacked and sometimes charged with dishonesty, Barrow usually was able to clear himself of such charges, either because of his real innocence or because of luck or skill in argument. In this case he did not win, however. Barrow announced to his readers on February 6, 1907, "The President, one day last week, accepted the resignation of A. D. Chamberlin as register of the Douglas land office, tendered through Senator Warren

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19. Letter to Richards, Jan. 18, 1907, *Copy Book*, p. 119. The "Hitchcock" referred to was Secretary of Interior. "Frank" was Congressman Frank Mondell.

20. Letter to Ed, Jan. 18, 1907, *Copy Book*, p. 120. "Ed" was probably Edmund J. Wells, former Douglas citizen, serving as private secretary to Senator C. D. Clark.



last October, and summarily dismissed me as receiver." (XXII, 35).

If a notice in the *Laramie Republican* of February 7, 1907, can be regarded as typical of public sentiment, evidently Barrow was not judged too critically by the people of the state:

Both Mr. Barrow and Mr. Chamberlin have been obliging, competent and honorable officers and the shortage was merely a matter of carelessness.<sup>21</sup>

Barrow lost the receivership, but his prestige and influence continued to increase steadily.

### BARROW, A STATE FIGURE

Merris C. Barrow first emerged as a state figure because of his interest in political activities and the forcefulness of his comments on political leaders and policies. The process of Barrow's transition from a middle-of-the-road position politically to an influential place in the Republican party can be found in the columns of the *Budget*. Before declaring himself as a Republican, Barrow was almost equally frank in his criticisms of certain leaders in both parties. Some of his early political comments contrast strangely with his staunch Republican sympathies of a later period.

In an editorial concerning the selection by the President of the United States of the Governor of the Territory of Wyoming in 1886, Barrow wrote that the people "would shed few tears over the removal of Francis E. Warren." (I, 6). Nor did he support another of the popular candidates, G. T. Beck, for this office (I, 6).

The "Political Talk" on the editorial page of a later issue in the same year contained a catchy but unfavorably critical comment about another Republican:

What sort of a man is this Vawsborg, anyhow? Prior to the incorporation meeting he was not in favor of the measure. At the Republican rally Monday night he made a somewhat lengthy harangue in favor of the measure—and of himself. And this man who seems to change his opinions oftener than he does his tie—wants to represent Albany county in the Tenth Legislative assembly! Thanks, no! (I, 20, 1886)

Barrow did not long continue his ill feeling toward Warren. By 1889, however, he had openly declared his paper Republican. Perhaps it was this affiliation that warmed his heart toward Warren and led him to laud President Harrison for naming Warren Governor of Wyoming. He said,

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21. *Laramie Republican*, XXII, 25, Feb. 7, 1907.

"The voice of the people has been heard and their hopes have been granted. All hail to Governor Warren!—Ta-ta to Tommy the Tramp!" (III, 43, 1889). Again in 1896, Barrow defended Warren warmly against attacks made by another Douglas paper, which Barrow called the **No News**, and the Cheyenne **Tribune** (X, February 26, 1896). Perhaps Barrow's increasing opportunities for acquaintance with Republican leaders or his better understanding of Republican policies influenced him to cast his lot with that party. He could have simply decided, of course, that it was good business to throw in his lot with the party consistently in power.

As he came to subscribe more completely to the tenets of the Republican party, he spoke out more violently against the leaders of the Democratic party. Journalistic "mud-slinging" against the candidates of an opposing party was freely used as a political weapon in Barrow's day. From the following article which appeared in the **Budget's** "Chit Chat" column in 1900, it is easy to believe that Barrow thoroughly enjoyed indulging in this form of political warfare:

"Will John Chawles Thompson accept the nomination for Congress tendered him, by the democracy of Wyoming?" anxiously inquires one demo-pop contemporary. Will a duck swim? It is true that the valiant colonel is sorter dallying with the sweet morsel, and thus far has said to every newspaper man who would stand still long enough that he had not yet decided whether he would accept the "honor," or not. But its all a bluff—another instance of the girl, who while vowing she'd ne'er consent, consented. She intended to surrender all the while—and so does John Chawles. Probably began on his letter of acceptance as soon as he sold those mines, for he's smart enough to know that the words "bar'l" and "unanimous nomination" are, in the eyes of a democratic convention, spelled with the same letters and in the same way and mean the same thing. (XV, 3, 1900)

Sometime later when J. C. Thompson, a Cheyenne attorney, was scheduled to appear in Douglas, the following item appeared in the **Budget**:

John Chawles Thompson—he of Kentucky—who thinks he is running for Congress, will hold forth at the opera house Friday evening and tell the people of Douglas why six cent wool is better than fourteen cent wool, and incidentally explain the beauties of free soup houses. A dance will follow the speech making. (XV, 14, 1900)

As Wyoming Territory grew financially and economically, the population increased rapidly. With this development, Wyoming leaders began to think of statehood. By July, 1889, the members of the Constitutional Convention had been selected. Among those chosen were numerous men of the press. Barrow of the **Budget** was one of these; his

friend Will Chaplin from the Laramie **Boomerang** was another; and a newspaper rival, J. K. Calkins of the Lusk **Herald**, was also chosen (IV, 6, 1889).

Six weeks later near the end of August, Barrow announced in the **Budget** his departure for Cheyenne to spend three weeks attending Wyoming's Constitutional Convention (IV, 12, 1889). Other delegates who accompanied him from Converse County were W. C. Irvine, a man of many activities in state politics whose interest lay with the cattlemen, DeForest Richards, later governor of Wyoming, and Calkins of Lusk. Barrow and Richards were listed as Republicans, while Calkins and Irvine were classed as Democrats.

The minutes and proceedings of the Constitutional Convention do not show that Barrow took a very active part in the debates. The roll calls of each session record that Barrow was not even a consistent attendant; however, he was a member of several committees. He represented Converse County on the Rules Committee, was named to Committee 14 on Railroads and Telegraphs, and served with Chaplin on Committee 17, Printing Publications, Accounts and Expenses. His two-day absences on three different occasions may have been because of trips to Douglas to assist in getting out the **Budget**. An article in the **Budget** for September 25, 1889, indicated that he did not think too highly of what he called the "Jack-in-the-box" atmosphere of the convention.

The constitutional convention may conclude its labors along in the shank of the current year—and it may not. As a matter of fact the work should have been concluded a week or ten days ago; and it would have been, were it not for the fact that there are a half-dozen or more talented gentlemen in the body of each of whom seems to be a sort of a Jack-in-the-box. Every once in a while—oftener in fact—the catch which holds these gentlemen down slips off, and they bob up and shake their gory locks at the convention. The gentlemen from Gander Creek moves to amend by inserting the word "tweedle dee" after the seventh word in line four of section 1-p. Then the gentleman from Jawbony moves to amend the amendment by substituting the word "tweedle dam" in lieu thereof. Then the catches slip off all over the house and a "general discussion" follows. An hour is spent, and finally both amendments are withdrawn. The convention draws a sigh of relief; but another spring gets in its work, and a motion from the gentlemen from Skeyenne to "strike out" goes on the record. This affords an excuse for another display of "oratory," and the gentlemen from Gremont, and Weetswater and from Yohnson fix their glittering eye in turn upon the pretty stenographer who is compelled to perpetuate on paper their parapetetic peeps, and argy, an' argy, an' argy.

Finally after chewing on the file for a half-day, it is referred back to the committee, and comes up again later for "further

consideration." It does seem, indeed, as though some of these gentlemen would do well to buy one of Edison's latest phonographs. This, is run by an electric motor or a ten-horse power engine, would afford relief. They could sit at their ease, and "hear themselves talk" twenty-four hours in a day. Arguments a half-hour in length and less than a half-inch in width and thickness, upon my honor, have been made in favor of matters which would have passed unanimously without a word having been said. Hours and days have been wasted in motions and amendments of the "tweedle-dum" order, and some members have piled "oration" upon "oration" to that extent that it is darkly hinted that the stenographer's typewritten report, when completed, will comprise 'steen million pages. And the mill is still grinding! (IV, 16, 1889.)

The delegates evidently pulled themselves together, reached some agreement, and finished the Constitution late in September. The Cheyenne **Daily Leader** of October 1, 1889, asserted that the session ended in a pleasant expression of friendship.<sup>1</sup> The **Leader** reported that "there was scarcely any ceremony about the final work of the body, but there was still something impressive about the way a hush fell over the throng as the members one by one affixed their signatures to the document,"<sup>2</sup> Barrow signing last.

By the following June, statehood was almost assured the Territory of Wyoming, and every one, including the **Budget's** owners, was prepared for the celebration. On June 25, 1890, Barrow said, "The **Budget** has attached a steam whistle to its engine and proposes to blow the lungs out of it when the statehood bill passes." (V, 3). "Statehood and a land office the same week! Douglas is getting there," cried Barrow on July 2, 1890 (V, 4). In the **Budget** of this date Barrow told of the way statehood was celebrated in Douglas:

At 4:30 Friday afternoon, the **Budget** received a telegram from Honorable W. C. Irvine, at Cheyenne, announcing the birth of the new state. At 4:31 the **Budget's** steam whistle was exercising its lungs to the best advantage and the **Budget's** flag was flying from the mast surmounting the office building.

Everybody tumbled!

The good news spread rapidly!

Within a few minutes the hoarse roar of the waterworks whistle swelled the song of greeting to the new state; the fire alarm bell rang, etc.

The two hundred ribbon badges printed by the **Budget** and distributed in Douglas on that eventful day indicated Barrow's excitement over statehood. A great deal of the credit for Wyoming's being admitted as the forty-fourth

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1. Cheyenne **Daily Leader**, XXIII, Oct. 1, 1889.

2. *Ibid.* The original document is on display in the State Museum in Cheyenne.

state was due to the work of Joseph M. Carey, Wyoming Territory's only delegate to Congress. The badges which Barrow prepared carried a tribute to Carey.

One of the most exciting events in Wyoming history reported by Barrow was the famous Johnson County War of 1892. It could not have been easy for Barrow to tell the story with some degree of impartiality. On one side were the settlers with small holdings, with whom he sincerely sympathized. On the other were the big cattlemen, mostly prominent Republicans and men whom Barrow knew personally. His reports of the controversy and its results ran through the **Budget** for almost a year, and his comments reflected interestingly his divided state of mind.

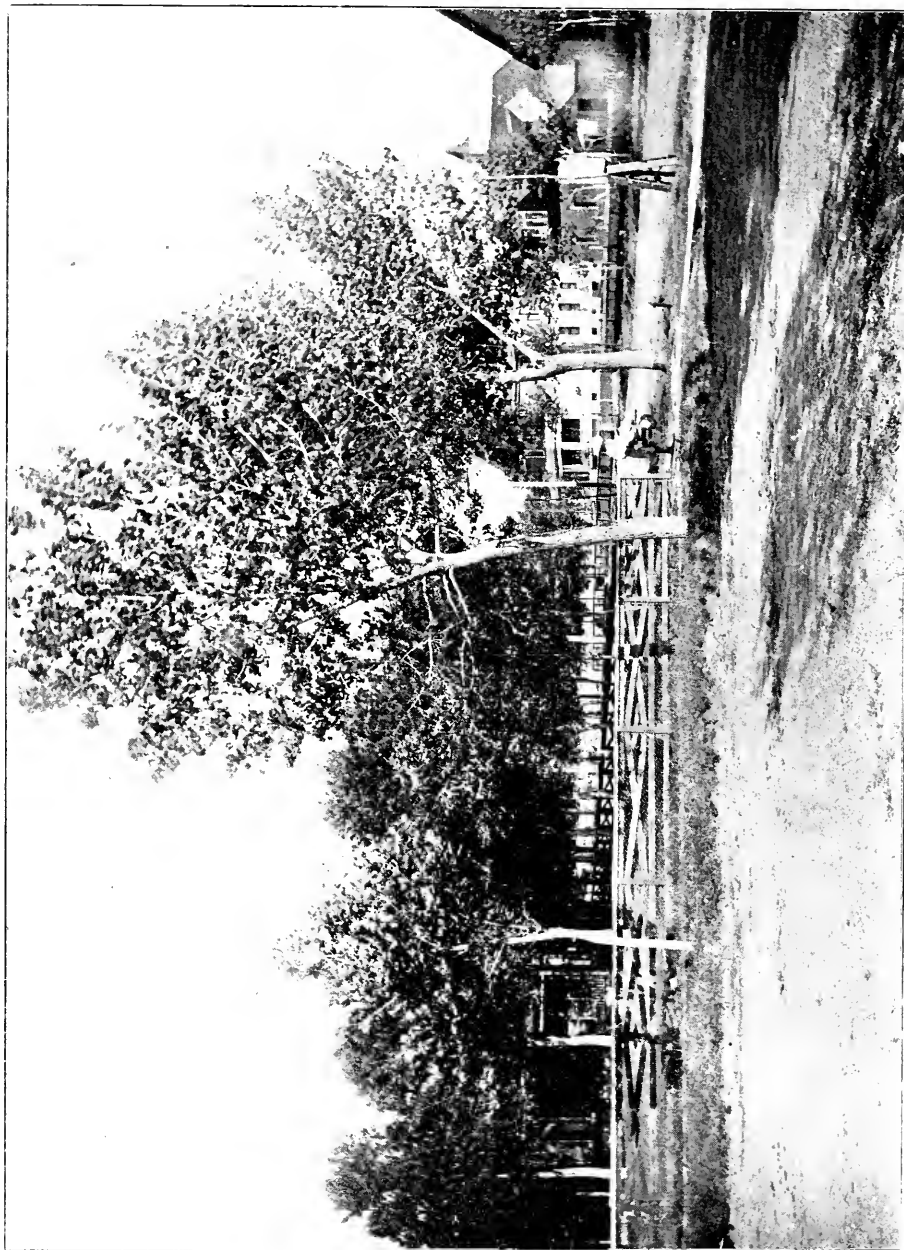
On April 13, 1892, the **Budget** had on page five the headline, "War." Under this heading Barrow told of a large, well-equipped, armed party, including a surgeon, two newspaper reporters, and a telegraph operator, which had gone into Johnson County to rid the country of rustlers. Barrow related the story of how two small ranchers had been killed and commented on the serious implications of the expedition and its intentions thus:

The statements of the captured teamsters is to the effect that they were hired last Tuesday night at Cheyenne, to go immediately to the Bald Mountain country, on a surveying expedition and pleasure trip . . . The captured men claim that they knew absolutely nothing as to the real intentions of the party until after leaving Casper, when they were informed that the object of the expedition was to run out cattle thieves, and that their pay was to be five dollars a day . . .

Public sentiment, which was at first against the rustlers, has rapidly changed in favor of the financially weaker faction as the true condition of affairs became known. No doubt many of the invading party firmly believe they are justified in their attempt to take the law into their own hands, for the sensational and exaggerated newspaper stories have magnified the strength of the rustlers in this county a thousandfold . . .

. . . No community of law-abiding American citizens will permit an armed force of any kind, organized for any purpose, to come into their midst and kill at their option men who have never been found guilty of crime by due process of law. (VI, 54, 1892)

The next issue contained pleas for "strict and impartial enforcement of the law," and for a swift punishment of those found guilty (VI, 46, 1892). Barrow maintained that "the theft of a steer couldn't in any way justify the taking of a human life," and the importation of a band of armed men into the state for any purpose was prohibited by the Constitution of Wyoming (VI, 46, 1892). Here he also told of the surrender without bloodshed of the forty-five invaders and said:



Courtesy of the Douglas Budget

# LAWNS AND TREES IN DOUGLAS

At this writing the situation is critical. On the ground that the prisoners would surely be lynched if surrendered to Sheriff Angus, Governor Barber is arranging to have them brought here under military escort, and probably on to Fort Russell. On the other hand Angus demands that they be placed in his hands, while small stockmen from all over the state are flocking into that section to enforce the demand, and it is reliably reported that today there are from five to six hundred men armed to the teeth waiting to avenge the killing of Champion and Ray. (VI, 46, 1892)

Barrow's own attitude toward the removal of the prisoners appeared in the same issue:

We believe, however, that it will be a mistake to remove the prisoners from Johnson County unless they are first given a preliminary hearing and are granted a change of venue . . . but there should be no favoritism shown because they happen to be rich and prominent men. The strict letter of the law should be followed in this matter, and no requirement be modified in their behalf other than that accorded every man charged with crime, be he rich or poor. (VI, 46, 1892)

By May 25, 1892, the editor of the **Budget** had begun to soften somewhat his demand for strict justice for the invaders. Here he spoke of the only outcome which he could see to the trouble in Johnson County—the prevalence of honesty. Barrow wrote, "The settlers will win, and the thieves will have to leave the country." (VI, 51, 1892).

In June Barrow spoke for the honest man, big or little, and declared that the **Budget** was for law and order (VI, 52, 1892). In this same paper, however, Barrow published a letter from a Johnson County small ranchman which portrayed the big rancher as benevolent, neighborly, and honest, and gave examples of rustlers posing as small ranchers and antagonizing their fellow ranchers against the big outfits (VI, 52, 1892). In a later issue Barrow practically made fun of the people of Johnson County for continuing to hold the invaders as prisoners and not paying for their keep (VII, 20, 1892). By February 22, 1893, Barrow was really placing the blame for the whole affair not on the invading big cattlemen, but on the juries chosen to try cattle thieves (VII, Feb. 22, 1893).

Meanwhile, according to the October 22, 1892, issue of the **Budget** the war had taken on political significance. A man by the name of Robert Dunning, who was supposedly a member of the invading party, made a confession tending to show that influential Republican leaders, Warren, Barber, and Blake, had known about the invasion, no Democrat being mentioned. Barrow evidently felt, and suggested this idea in the **Budget**, that the Democrats were taking advantage of this bit of unreliable news to cast disparaging remarks upon the Republican leadership in the state. Bar-

row left it to his readers to choose between the word of a "self-confessed murderer," Dunning, and "that of men . . . whose word heretofore had been as good as their bond." (VII, 20, 1892).

Barrow evidently tried to live up to his paper's motto, "Fair, Faithful, and Fearless," in his interpretation of state events and his reflection of state personalities. But prejudices and political expediency, as with practical men of affairs everywhere, sometimes blinded him, no doubt, in his judgments of men and issues. On the whole, he tried, it would seem, to be loyal to his principles as well as to his party and his friends.

With statehood, Barrow's participation in the Republican party became even greater. In the elections of 1892, however, the Republican party was defeated throughout the country and Cleveland became President of the United States the following March. Barrow, no doubt, realized that the election returns would mean a change of personnel in the Land Office when he said, "The **Budget** regrets that the later returns do not materially change the reports of a sweeping democratic victory on the national ticket . . . Cleveland is elected by a large majority." (VII, 24, 1892). The Republicans lost the state elections also, and the fusion candidate of the Democrats and Populists, John E. Osborne, was elected governor. Since the political situation was confused by echoes from the Johnson County War and the refusal or failure of some counties to report election returns, Osborne had himself sworn into office in December.<sup>3</sup> Twelve years later when Osborne was again seeking office, Barrow brought up with telling effect the story of Osborne's unconventional assumption of the governorship in 1892. He headed a page in large type, "Osborne's Record as Governor." The rest of the sheet was left blank. On another page of the same paper Barrow inserted the following sentence:

December 3, 1892, Osborne crawled through the capitol window into the governor's office. (XX, 21, 1904)

Evidently the results of elections in 1894 were again disappointing to Barrow. Nevertheless, he made the following statement on November 7, 1894, indicating that he would drop his disappointment and look to the future:

The election is over. Let the result be what it may, we must abide by the result. We are all citizens of a common country, and we can't afford to keep up or countenance the strife of the

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3. Bartlett, *History of Wyoming*, I, 216-217.



past few weeks. Accept the result, drop politics, and let's all unite to do what we can toward the development and prosperity of the county, town, and state in which we live. (IX, 24, 1894)

Having been released from the Land Office during Cleveland's administration, Barrow could accept positions in the state government. He was chief clerk of the House in the sessions of the State Legislature of 1894 and 1896.<sup>4</sup> Chaplin recalled that Barrow made an excellent clerk, having a good voice and being a good reader.<sup>5</sup> No matter what he may or may not have contributed to the State Legislature, he brought to the people of Douglas during these years many first-hand accounts of developments in the government of the state, coloring all of them with his own personality. The paper of January 30, 1895, contained a vivid description of a reception for Senators Warren and Clark:

Mrs. Bill and I attended the reception given at Turner Hall last week, in honor of our two new senators. It was an event. "Dr." Barber and "Dick" Repath were in charge of the decorations, and Turner Hall never will wear such fine clothes again. Flags, bunting, banners and electric lights galore served to transform the spacious edifice into a veritable fairy-land, filled to overflowing with fair women and brave men. Two thousand ladies and gentlemen attended, in response to a general invitation extended through the medium of the public press—and they were ladies and gentlemen, in all that the term implies. Senators Warren and Clark, with their charming wives, received this mighty host and gracefully acknowledged the hearty and sincere congratulations showered upon them by friends and admirers until near 10 o'clock, when dancing began. Refreshments were served until midnight, and it was 3 a.m. before the programme was concluded. The entire affair was a credit to the enterprise of the Cheyennese, and a deserved tribute to the gentlemen in whose honor it was given. (IX, 36, 1895)

Two weeks later on February 13, Barrow wrote to the **Budget** of the anticipated close of the session as follows:

The last week of the session begins tomorrow, and it promises to be a busy one for members and employes. Night sessions will be the rule, and it is quite probable that when decent people are holding down a pew in church next Sunday morning, our legislators—with the hands of the clock pointing to 11:30 p.m. of Saturday—will be grinding out laws at a lively rate. "After the ball is over" I shall try, as best I can, to give some inside history relating to divers and sundry matters connected with the session—matters which I have been compelled to put aside in order to properly discharge my duties as clerk of that august body, the house. With five assistants, I find my time fully occupied, just now. (IX, 38, 1895)

This item was followed by one on February 20, 1895, announcing the closing of the session. Here Barrow also

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4. *Progressive Men of the State of Wyoming*, p. 500.

5. Letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

mentions his own reward as chief clerk, a gold pen. (IX, 39, 1895)

On February 24, 1897, at the next session in which Barrow participated, the Legislature, according to Barrow's report, passed seventy-nine laws which he believed were just and wise measures, although he predicted that every one in the lot would no doubt be condemned "by one or more blooming idiots scattered throughout the state." (XI, 39, 1897). The **Budget**, which appeared the next week on March 3, 1897, contained an entertaining summary of the session, revealing both its serious moments and the antics of its fun-packed hours of relaxation, praising its accomplishments, but also recording hostile criticisms:

About the closing hours of the legislative session, there was a heap of fun, and some fire. The usual "horse-play" was indulged in, by both house and senate. A sure enough third house was organized in that wing of the capital about midnight, and Attorney Burke installed as speaker, with Colonel Slack of the Sun-Leader as sergeant-at-arms. About a hundred men were run in from the lobby, who swarmed over the floor and—for a half hour—represented the thirty-eight representatives who for forty days had answered to roll-call. All sorts of queer resolutions were introduced and motions made, all of which were handled by the "squatter" speaker in a manner truly refreshing, and with a dispatch which startled the sure-enough members. Late comers—among them Sheriff Patton, Pat Sullivan, and several other Natrona county boys who drifted in on the midnight train—were seized by the legislative magistrate, hustled before the bar, and compelled to make a speech. Sullivan didn't do a thing to 'em but break the dread news, as gently as possible, that some day the capital would be moved to central Wyoming—and the speaker had the requisite nerve to put the proposition in the form of a motion, and declared it carried. The introduction of a "bill" in the form of a quart bottle filled with genuine Scotch whiskey finally dissolved the somewhat obstreperous assemblage. . . .

After having spent forty days within the "inner circle" of the Fourth legislature; after having read every bill introduced, and having signed every measure which finally became a law; after having had opportunity to compare the appropriations made with those of previous legislatures, and being fully cognizant of the work and results of the entire session, I had made up my mind that the record was a good one, and one of which every man connected therewith might well be proud. . . . As I have said, I had decided that the Fourth State Legislature was destined to pass into history as one of the wisest and best legislative bodies ever convened within our borders; but it seems that in some way I have been most woefully misinformed and misled. The Glenrock correspondent of the Casper **Derrick** has been sizing up the work of the session, as well as I, and he has likewise decided upon a verdict. He boldly declares that it was "the rottenest and most damnable combination of social outcasts and political pirates in the history of the state." Well, maybe so. (XI, 40, 1897)

Meanwhile Barrow had begun to make a place for himself at Republican state conventions, having been elected secretary of the one at Sheridan in 1896 and having been chosen as an alternate to the national convention at St. Louis (X, May 20, 1896). In 1898 Barrow worked with DeForest Richards to bring the Republican state convention to Douglas and was successful (XX, 22, 1905).

In addition to his political activities in the state, the editor of **Bill Barlow's Budget** assisted in organizing the Wyoming Press Association in 1891. It began with enthusiastic plans to include newspaper men from all over the state, but the obstacles in the way of successful meetings in a state where distances were so great prevented it from functioning actively. Several references to the Wyoming Press Association appeared in the columns of the **Budget**. On October 18, 1893, Barrow informed the new "pencil-pushers" of the state who were clamoring for an Association that such an organization existed, although meetings had not been held regularly because of the size of the territory:

For the information of these gentlemen the **Budget** will state that in the fall of 1881, at Laramie, Wyoming, the Wyoming Press Association was organized, with a membership of twelve editors present. Bill Nye was chosen president. Since that time, Dr. Hayford, of the Laramie Sentinel, and E. A. Slack, of the Cheyenne Sun, have also held that office for one or more years. The last meeting of the association was held at Cheyenne in September, 1889, when M. C. Barrow of the **Budget** was chosen president; W. E. Chaplin of the Laramie **Republican**, vice-president; John C. Friend, secretary; C. E. Blydenburgh, treasurer; and E. A. Slack, J. F. Ludin, John F. Carrol, J. H. Hayford and M. C. Barrow, executive committee. It was decided to hold the next meeting the following year at Douglas in case the Cheyenne and Northern was completed in time, but the executive committee decided to omit the annual gathering because of the failure of the road to reach this city in time. No meeting has been held since. We might add that there is something over \$50 in the association treasury, which would buy the cigars for the gang should they decide to meet again. Experience has proven that Wyoming cannot yet successfully carry on the work which necessarily belongs to an association of this character. The territory is too large . . . (VIII, 22, 1893)

The Association met again in Laramie in 1896 (XI, 3, 1896), but its activity apparently lapsed once more. In 1901 Barrow announced that a fresh attempt was being made to revive the Association at a meeting in Cheyenne. He was clearly skeptical of the success of the attempt. "I fear me much that history will repeat itself—but an' it don't rain, I'll be there." (XVI, 5, 1901).

## BARROW DIPS HIS PEN IN ACID

"Barrow's personal journalism was at times rather bitter and was calculated to get him into trouble," wrote W. E. Chaplin in 1947.<sup>1</sup> A present-day reader of the **Budget's** columns would be inclined to say that Mr. Chaplin was guilty of understatement. Sometimes comments appearing in the **Budget** produced results which Barrow did not expect. "On one occasion a citizen of Douglas met him on a street and gave him a rather sound beating. Barrow appealed to the Masonic lodge for aid in the punishment of his assailant, but got no consideration."<sup>2</sup> At another time Barrow said too much in the **Budget** about adjutant-general Frank A. Stitzer, an appointee of acting-governor Fenimore Chatterton, whom he described as wearing "celluloid cuffs that rattled when he walked."<sup>3</sup> A short time after this statement was published, while Barrow was attending the Wyoming Industrial Convention at Casper as the guest of A. J. Mokler, members of the state militia appeared at the Mokler home and demanded that Barrow be turned over to them. Their intention was to throw him in a blanket and toss him in the Platte River, but Mokler prevented the ducking.<sup>4</sup> He maintained that a man's house was his castle and, taking a rifle from his gun cabinet, "announced in a firm voice that he would shoot the first person who cared to enter his gate."<sup>5</sup>

Barrow's fiercest editorial battles were against other newspapers and their editors, and these seldom brought threats of violence. When he was assured that his assailant's rebuttal would be made verbally, Barrow could feel reasonably certain of success from the beginning. In the columns of his paper Barrow attacked indiscriminately, at one time or another, most of the newsmen of the state;<sup>6</sup> however, he saved his most acrimonious outbursts for rivals in his own locality. He and rival editors haggled over possible improvements for the town, politics, and the contents of their papers. Often they just found fault with each other in an effort at self-preservation.

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1. Letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Agnes Spring, **William Chaplin Deming** (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1944), p. 170.

4. A. J. Mokler, Interview, Casper, Wyoming, Oct., 1946.

5. Spring, **W. C. Deming**, p. 171.

6. Two newspaper men of the state whom Barrow apparently regarded so highly that he did not subject them to his usual bitter attacks were A. J. Mokler of Casper and W. E. Chaplin of Laramie.

When one considers the six papers that passed out of existence in Douglas while Barrow kept doing business, one can understand that the **Budget** probably survived only by battling for supremacy. After boom days when the population of Douglas leveled off, the town could scarcely support two papers adequately. A slight quarrel originating as a contest for leadership between two news sheets very often became a fight for existence. The editor of the **Budget** was always ready to accept the challenge of a competitor, and with his talent for devastating name-calling, he found ways to ridicule the rival paper and to smear its editor's reputation to his own satisfaction.

Under Barrow's leadership the **Budget** was instrumental in putting numerous newspaper contemporaries out of circulation. The **Rowdy West**, edited and published by E. H. Kimball, an early arrival in the Fetterman country, lived only a year. The Douglas **Advertiser**, which was edited by I. R. Crow, an old friend of Barrow, had an even shorter life span. The Douglas **Republican**, that claimed to have "skinned" the **Budget**, went out of business in July, 1889, after a short life of thirteen months. Another Kimball-edited paper, the **Graphic**, appeared next, met the **Budget's** antagonism, and passed out of existence in 1891. The **Converse County News**, supposed mouthpiece of DeForest Richards, whom Barrow had angered, held its own for only eight months. Then the **Central Wyoming News**, stronger than the others, kept circulating a weekly news sheet from October, 1894 to May, 1898.

Although Barrow always posed as having been attacked or misused and protested his reluctance to become embroiled in a verbal fight, he enjoyed composing the caustic editorials against these men and their respective papers. The following is a typical Barrow approach to a bitter battle:

I do wish my local contemporaries would let me alone. First the Wooly man jumped me, and I let him hammer away unnoticed for a couple of months, hoping he'd get tired; but he wouldn't let up, so I had to let him down. Now the Leet-Crow combination is snarling and barking at my heels and I am again compelled to take up the cudgel of self-defence. I know it is wrong to quarrel and fight—have not forgotten that the good book tells us to turn the other cheek when some rooster biffs you on the jaw—but I am tired. I have practiced patience and forbearance until either has ceased to be a virtue, and both must take a back seat until I have taught my envious and jealous rivals to let me alone. Print your little papers, boys; but don't persist in sneering at, lying about and slurring the **Budget**. (I, 37, 1886)

The **Rowdy West**, printed in Iowa for distribution in the Fetterman region, was the **Budget's** first newspaper rival.

This competitor provided the people of Douglas with an eight-page paper, which was, however, only half as large as the **Budget** in size. Like **Bill Barlow's Budget**, its title spread across the top of the first sheet in large script type each word being sloped upward; but, unlike the **Budget**, this title was placed on a background of etched figures engaged in various activities.

E. H. Kimball, the editor and publisher of this news sheet, offered it to the public for \$2.00 a year in advance, one dollar cheaper than the **Budget**. An examination of early issues led to the conclusion that it was worth even less as a newspaper.<sup>7</sup> The "Wild and Wooly West," the name given Kimball's paper by the **Budget's** editor, also had "patent innards," and the remaining news space was only half that of the **Budget**. These columns were then loaded with much news from exchanges and contained very few personal items about the people of the frontier town and their activities. This dearth of Douglas news was probably unavoidable, since the sheet was at first printed in Iowa. The August 8, 1886, issue announced the arrival in Douglas of the printing plant and later issues may have shown an improvement in local news. This issue also announced the changing of publication date from Wednesday to Sunday. Kimball evidently had begun to feel the effects of the **Budget's** existence and the competition which its circulation on Wednesday offered.

At first Barrow tried, or pretended to try, to be friendly. He welcomed the arrival of Kimball's plant by saying, "the more the merrier." (I, 8, 1886). Hostilities apparently were beginning by the end of August, however, when Barrow commented on the three-column paragraph which Kimball had included in his last paper, devoted to some person, probably Barrow, who had been talking about him. Here the **Budget's** editor assured Kimball that time would make amends. He went on to say that the **Rowdy West** was a fair paper in all but the color and the name, although it had a little too much dime-novel slang occasionally. By December a good deal of warmth had evidently been produced, for Barrow had begun a verbal warfare with Kimball that was to continue for years. Barrow first gave space in his paper to the derogatory statements about the **Rowdy West** made by other Wyoming editors, and then attacked both the paper and its editor viciously.

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7. Two copies of the **Rowdy West**, those for June 23 and Aug. 8, 1886, are preserved by the Wyoming State Historical Department and have been examined.

Yet, as one reflects upon it, anger dies away. . . And more pitiable still, it does not realize its position any more clearly than its editor who, steeped in liquor, goes to sleep in the gutter occasionally if not more frequently, unconscious of the spectacle which he makes of himself and of the shame and scorn which he awakens. (I, 29, 1886)

By December Barrow had also affixed to Kimball's name the title "Castor Oil," a term which he used to designate his rival for years (I, 30, 1886). He called the **Wooly** man a liar although not an artistic one, classed his paper as a "Mud Bath" and "journalistic hybred," a "disgrace to Douglas" (I, 31, 1887). Barrow even accused the **Rowdy West** of using more vulgar and obscene language than that used by professed sporting papers (I, 32, 1887). A month later on January 25, 1887, Barrow warmed up to the quarrel by saying that although Kimball's paper did not contain as much filth as formerly, the editor was still a contemptible pup, who did not pay his bills and could not be trusted to handle the financial affairs of others.

Since only one side of this quarrel in print was available for study, it is impossible to estimate the validity of Barrow's accusations that the **Rowdy's** editor kept up the fight which he climaxed in a five-column spread against Barrow in one issue of the **Wild, Weird, Wooly Winsome yet Winked-out Wowdy**. It is known, however, that Barrow held up his side of the battle and finally published the following malicious notice in the **Budget** when the **Rowdy West** announced a move to Glenrock:

As a community we weep! A deep and crushing sorrow, has come upon us! None of your soft corn or jumping toothache sorrows, but a great grief which runs the pulse-beat up to 102 in the shade and makes heart-strings twang with an exceeding great twing! Death has again entered our journalistic circle, and laid its palsyng hand upon another member thereof!

The **Rowdy West** is dead!

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In September of Barrow's first year in the Fetterman country I. R. Crow, an old friend and "boyhood pard" who had been printing the **Argus** at Buffalo Gap, gave Barrow notice that he had been "froze out" there and that he intended to move to Douglas. Barrow warned Crow in his "Chit Chat" column that two papers were enough for the "boomer," but expressed hope that Crow would do well, and said, "If it comes to a question of freeze-out between him and my pink-eyed neighbor [Kimball], I'll empire [sic.] the game impartially." (I, 15, 1886). The **Advertiser** "winked out" even before the **Rowdy West** on April 16, 1887 (II, 5, 1887).

The next rival, the **Douglas Republican**, appeared first on June 20, 1888, and by October Barrow had begun to quarrel

in his "Chit Chat" column with its editor, Dilworth. On December 26, 1888, a typical Barrow barrage appeared in the columns of the **Budget**:

The **Republican** claims to have "skinned" the **Budget**, and to have tanned the said skin "to the queen's taste," but people who will take the trouble to compare that sheet with this—with its ten pages teeming with news and bearing every evidence of prosperity and permanency—will wonder whether or no the **Republican** hasn't put the shoe on the wrong foot. If this means to be skinned, blessed if it isn't a much more pleasant torture than I had supposed, and I only hope my esteemed contemporary will continue in the good work. It's heaps of fun—and it pays—to be skun in this way. (III, 30, 1888)

In two more months Barrow was poking fun at his rival in earnest by comparing him to the preacher who turned his nail keg of sermons over when he had exhausted his supply.

Dilworth was accused of using stereotype plates which Barrow did not actually condemn but which according to the **Budget's** editor should not be repeated regardless of their humorous content as was "Bob Burdette's Humor" published first on January 12th and again on February 23rd. "... The same," said Barrow, "is true of an article bearing the ghastly title of 'Beheading a Corpse'," which is found in these same two issues. (III, 39, 1889). According to the **Budget**, times were getting bad for the **Republican** in April (III, 45, 1889), and on July 27, 1889, this paper also ceased circulation.

In 1891 the Glenrock **Graphic** was purchased, probably being backed by prominent Democrats of the county, and moved to Douglas, where Colonel E. H. Kimball, who undertook the editorial and business management of it, could again exchange words with his editorial rival, M. C. Barrow. As usual Barrow wished him well at first (V, 48, 1891); six weeks later he again extended a hearty welcome to the newcomer, Douglas's fifth paper, when he said that he "in no wise feared honest and honorable competition." (VI, 2, 1891). The competition lasted only a year, for on June 22, 1892, Barrow reported that the Douglas **Graphic** had suspended publication indefinitely.

In 1893 DeForest Richards and Dr. Wilson, who had had their "toes pinched" by the **Budget** according to Barrow, decided that **Bill Barlow's Budget** and its editor must be starved out. With this end in view they made plans to establish a Republican paper. They brought a man by the name of Campbell to Douglas to canvass the town personally. They assured him that the **Budget** had only a few



friends (VIII, 27, 1893). In the November 22, 1893, issue of the **Budget**, Barrow greeted his new competitor, the **Converse County Press**, with the usual fraternal greetings and promise of courtesy, but gave a warning note of future tangles in his reference to the two gentlemen who posed as its godfathers (III, 27, 1893). More disparaging remarks about the new Republican paper appeared in subsequent issues. Finally on December 13, 1893, Barrow announced that since Colonel Richards was sending out sample copies of his new paper, the **Budget** would do the same in order that those who were not on the **Budget's** subscription list might compare the two publications. The **Converse County Press** sold for less than the **Budget**, but Barrow wrote, "Western people always buy the best, and are not to be caught by Cheap John goods because they are cheap." (VIII, 30, 1893).

Bitter words were being exchanged between Barrow and the editors of the "handpress" by the end of May, 1894. The **Budget's** competitors printing "a half-column" howl about being slandered gave Editor Bill a chance to strike again.

No amount of newspaper bluff can deceive the business men of Douglas as to the circulation of the **Press**. They see its little package of ready-prints—about the size of a roll of wall paper—carried up from the depot each week, and no amount of newspaper "guff" or abuse of the **Budget**, such as our esteemed contemporary indulged in last week can convince them that its entire weekly circulation exceeds 100 copies. (VIII, 52, 1894)

By fall, Barrow had succeeded in putting another Douglas newspaper aspirant out of business.

The **Budget**, this week placed another newspaper heading within the crepe-enshrined frame which hangs above the office desk—that of the late lamented **Converse County Press**. Five cold clammy corpses have been interred to date—since the birth of the **Budget**—in the Douglas newspaperial cemetery—the **Rowdy West**, the **Douglas Advertiser**, the **Douglas Republican**, the **Douglas Graphic** and now the **Press**. Peace to their ashes. (IX, 19, 1894)

When the **Converse County Press** was out of the way, the editor of the **Budget** could devote more time to exterminating another Douglas news sheet which had begun publication in the same year as the **Press**. Almost as he wrote the death notice about the **Press**, he began his campaign against the **Central Wyoming News** by saying:

I suppose the **Central Wyoming News**—name bigger 'n the paper itself—will soon begin to brag about the rapid increase

of its subscription list, and pat itself on the back in other ways, just like its predecessor. If it does, look out for another funeral, for it's a sure sign. (IX, 21, 1894)

The **News** was run by a little Englishman, Arthur Phillips, who reportedly was afraid of Barrow;<sup>8</sup> however, the editor of the **Budget** said that Colonel Phillips had called Barrow a "bloated numskull" a "Chump," and lots of other pet names. Barrow on the other hand, spoke of Phillips as a "gifted writer," a "brilliant journalist," etc. In 1897, however, Barrow began a more vigorous assault than he had previously made upon the **News**:

Evidently His Nobbs, Kunnel Authaw, of the **Central Wyoming Hangman's Noose**, knows as little about legislative procedure as he does about matters newspaporial. I notice that in the last issue of his little leaflet he gives Senator Cross a dose of his celebrated "love and lather" specific, and adds that "The people of Douglas have reason to thank him for his strong opposition to House Bill No. 32, which contemplates the confiscation of city licenses." The fact is that House Bill No. 32 never reached the senate, but received its indefinite postponement quietus in the house, consequently, Senator Cross had absolutely nothing to do with its defeat. Possibly His 'Iness, the Kunnel, has an idea that Mr. Cross sorter presides over both bodies of the legislative layout, and can vote in either branch, as the notion strikes him. Either this, or he thinks his readers are all blooming idiots. (XI, 37, 1897)

Finally Phillips sued M. C. and Minnie F. Barrow for libel, asking \$10,000 damages. In April, 1898, to the chagrin of the **News**, the court ruled that the article on which the suit was brought and which had appeared in the **Budget** of June 5, 1895, was insufficient cause for action (XII, April 20, 1898). A little over a year later the **Budget** contained a notice of death for the **Central Wyoming News** (XII, May 25, 1898).

Thus the **Budget** warred against and defeated six local newspaper contemporaries. Another rival, the Lusk **Herald**, though not of Douglas, was too close to be ignored. Jimmy Mayes, who had been a printer on the **Budget** in 1888, had by the turn of the century become editor of the Lusk **Herald**. In this capacity he became a competitor of Barrow's for county printing and thus brought himself and his paper within range of the **Budget's** caustic editorializing. Barrow did not succeed in eliminating the **Herald** as a rival, but he delivered painful thrusts in bitter passages like the following:

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8. Henry Reese, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, October, 1946.

Among the journalistic freaks of this corner of the vineyard, none can hold a candle to the little **Lusk Herald**. As a rule Wyoming's demo-pop papers are poor, weak sisters who don't even pretend to either virtue or good looks. They are a skinny, pimply-faced, ringboned and spavined outfit; they know it, and everybody else knows it, and they don't care a cuss. But its different with the **Herald**. True, its local page, like those of its sisters in crime, is made up of rotten English and badly tainted French mixed with Bowery slang—exemplifying as it does the lamentable ignorance and gross instincts of the writer thereof. On the other hand—no; same hand but other page—we find grandiloquent ideas, well-rounded sentences and an elegance of expression which is not met with else where in the press of the state. It's simply beautiful, at times, and I've often wondered who wrote it. Mayes, of course, grinds out the local stuff—no question about that, for one can see his phiz between every line. But no man but a lunatic—and he an incurable—would venture to assert that the same man wrote both pages. One is written by a third-rate printer who dreams that he is an "editor," the other by a gentleman and a scholar and I presume, a good judge of whisky, for much of it has the southern twang of eloquence as well as polish. Who ever he is he either has the patience of Job or else never sees a copy of the **Herald**, for Mayes has stolen his stuff right along and reproduced it as "original" for over ten years now, without a kick. But if he should die, what would become of the **Herald's** editorial" page? Horrible thought! (XV, 1, 1900)

In 1898 Emerson H. Kimball, who was later a resident of Casper for many years, was evidently stirring up trouble again and evoked this acrimonious response from the editor of the **Budget**:

Everybody knows I'm a man of peace, possessing a temper like Wyoming oil for evenness and absence of friction and a nature which just naturally cottons to chicken pie and feather beds. I hate a row. It's wearing on the patience and the mind—likewise the proboscis at times—and makes a man lose sight of the old-time proverb which directs him to love his neighbor as his—not his neighbor's wife. "But there comes a time some day," even in the affairs of pencil pushers, when suthin' has to be did; when some d--d fool who imagines he is a torpedo destroyer or a Dewey II, gets to prancing around on the tail of your robe, swipes you a few swats on the smeller and asks you how you like it—and you simply can't do anything else but get next to him or run. A fellow known as "Old Castor Oil"—who prints a paper at Casper called the **Derrick** and who, just now, is posing as the mouthpiece of and wet nurse for Congressman John E. Osborne, has seen fit to climb onto my collar and insists on a ride—and he's going to get it. (XIII, 3, 1898)

After making reference to his guinea-hen laugh, loud-mouthed pretensions to honesty and decency, double-dealing, rascality, insufferable egotism and unlimited egotism and unlimited gall, Barrow wrote that "Old Castor Oil" had realized twelve years ago that if he expected to stay in Douglas long he had to run the **Budget** out (XIII, 3, 1898).

Barrow also recalled that Kimball accused him of dodging vigilance committees and being a consort of prostitutes and thieves and charged him with going to church drunk and to bed in the alley to get sober. Barrow went on to say that after Kimball's accusations during those early days in Douglas, he had begun to wonder "why the cussed officers of the law were so lax in their duties" as to permit him to run at large and why "Mrs. Bill," whom he had always considered an exemplary woman, persisted in trying to longer live with him. (XIII, 3, 1898). Because of this early controversy, asserted Barrow, the euphonious prefix of "Castor Oil" was so firmly fixed to Kimball's name that he came to be known by it throughout the state. Barrow also maintained that "it's a bunch of Philippine islands to a hand of Weyler's hair that even St. Peter will use it in directing the old cuss to take elevator 23456, on its next down trip." (XIII, 3, 1898). In the characteristic violent journalism of the day, Barrow in more acrimonious passages called Kimball a shyster, a sneak, a fawning hypocrite, a blow-hard, and a political prostitute whose stiletto could be bought by anyone for a dollar and declared that "careful housewives were unable longer to even use it [his paper] on pantry shelves for fear it would make the butter taste." (XIII, 4, 1898). The attack continued in the issues of the next three weeks until Barrow, expressing regret for time and space wasted on so trivial a rival, ended his series on Kimball in the **Budget** of July 13, 1898:

. . . The fellow has ability in a way; but with the instincts of a brute, the education of a bunco-steerer, the habits of a Hottentot, the treachery of a Spaniard and the political training of a prostitute and demagogue, the inner consciousness of the man is soon revealed to even the most casual observer . . . However, I'm sorry now that I devoted so much time and ammunition to him, and if I inadvertently get a projectile into his case-hardened anatomy anywhere which hurts this feelins', I'm equally repentant. I sincerely hope we'll be able to jog along in the newspaper harness together without further trouble. (XIII, 7, 1898)

The continuous publication of the **Budget** during the years when six local competitors passed out of existence and editorial wars raged with other newspapers was a commentary on the quality of both the paper and the man. Barrow used every means in his war for survival. By modern standards his personal attacks would be considered foul rather than fair. But in a period when such tactics were commonplace, perhaps he had a right to be proud of his boxed reminder on the editorial page that while other Douglas papers died, the **Budget** lived on.

## GONE OVER THE RANGE

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SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF  
OUR 'STEEMED CONTEMPORARIES  
THEY WERE, BUT ARE NOT.

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Brought here with intent to "run out"  
The Budget—but we buried the bunch.

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### THE ROWDY WEST

Born ug. 4, 1886; Died July 24, 1887

### DOUGLAS ADVERTISER

Born Nov. 9, 1886; Died April 16, 1887

### DOUGLAS REPUBLICAN

Born June 30, 1888; Died July 27, 1889

### THE GRAPH C

Born Nov. 27, 1890; Died ep. 27, 1891

### CONVERSE COUNTY PRESS

Born Feb. 9, 1894; Died Sep. 24, 1894

### CENTRAL WYOMING NEWS

Born Oct. 2, 1894; Died May 18, 1898

Record of Defeated Local  
Newspaper Rivals

## THE BUDGET COMES OF AGE

No startling change was made in the physical make-up of **Bill Barlow's Budget** from the day of its inception until Barrow's death. The title which was scrawled across the top of the page was the same in 1910 as it was in 1886. While column headings and advertising remained similar, the style of the articles grew into something crudely artistic and to many readers appealing.

The headings for special columns, although not always exactly the same, varied only slightly. Almost each issue contained a "Chit Chat" column in which some news was reported, but usually it was reserved for editorial comment. During the early years of the **Budget**, this column was generally placed on the first page of the paper. Page four, with the owners and staff listed in the upper left-hand corner, was customarily devoted to editorials and exchanges, but comments on local news were often scattered over the page. Barrow evidently realized that an item about the boy next door or the girl down the street was more interesting to the average reader than news of

the conditions of the world in the state or national capital. The volume of local news which appeared in his "Short Stops" column on page five indicated that he knew something about practically everything in and around Douglas. He realized that legs were as good as brains in reporting<sup>1</sup> and did not sit around the **Budget** office waiting for news to come to him. Barrow probably enjoyed his excursions among fellow citizens to get the personals, local announcements, and notices similar to present-day want ads which he printed on page five.

The paper continued through the years of Barrow's editorship to have "patent print" because he thought it of "untold value to the country press." (II, 35, 1888). He believed his "patent innards" to be "worthy of all praise" since they were typographically and editorially perfect and contained in his opinion the "gist" of the best literature of the day:

It enables the **Budget**, for instance, to lay before its readers each week just twenty columns more of bright and interesting reading matter than would be possible were the paper printed all at home. To print such a paper as we now issue all at home would increase our payroll at least \$300 a month, or \$3,600 a year—men everywhere were slow to endorse the so-called "patent print," but its value is becoming recognized more and more, and its sphere of usefulness largely increased as Father Time's hour-glass changes ends. Even the daily press now uses "plates"—including every daily paper published in Wyoming—and there is really no difference between a "stereotype plate print" and a "patent print." . . . All would use it [patent print] did there not exist some good reason preventing its use. (II, 35, 1888)

The **Budget** is proud of its patent. When Douglas rises to the dignity of a Daily **Budget**, the Weekly **Budget** will be printed all at home and not before. (II, 35, 1888)

**Bill Barlow's Budget**, like other papers of its day and locality, carried many advertisements. The locally printed pages were sometimes nearly half full of notices from local or regional merchants and producers, and the "patent prints" carried advertising by national companies. Although the **Budget** ran fewer advertisements than some early news sheets, it must have averaged fair profit from such sources. At times, especially when Barrow put out a twelve-page paper, there would be at least one page filled completely with advertising.

Like their contemporaries in the newspaper field, the Barrows advertised their own enterprises extensively. They included notices about the stationery store, announcements about the plants and flowers available at the green-

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1. Chaplin, letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

house, suggestions concerning suitable insurance policies, and of course continuous reminders of their job-printing service.

Barrow evidently recognized that the issues of the **Budget** afforded a valuable record of a town and its people—a record not duplicated elsewhere. Even though the issues of the **Budget** had not been consistently bound during the first fourteen years, each issue of a year was consistently identified as a part of a single volume. By April, 1900, almost enough issues had been published to fill fourteen volumes.

Barrow reported in his "Chit Chat" column April 25, 1900, that the job department had for the past week been "engaged in arranging, compiling, and binding in book form the files of the **Budget** for the past ten years." (XIV, 47, 1900). It is interesting that Barrow himself saw the significance of his paper as a record of local history and commented as follows:

What a record of city, county and state—a truthful and complete history wherein everything is set down, from the birth of triplets to the estimable wife of Mr. John Smith to the failure of the A. L. New legislature to elect a senator because of a shortage of cocktails and coin. Incidentally the prosperity and progress of state and nation is recorded, likewise. Ten years is but a notch in the stick of time and comparatively nothing in the immensity of eternity; and yet in the growth and development of any community it comprises much of interest, and furnishes a vast amount of that stuff which newspapers term news. (XIV, 47, 1900)

In going through these volumes one notices some changes and improvements from one year to another. Barrow put into use each year new ideas and methods and thus gave his readers a better and more interesting coverage of what was going on around them. An examination of the files reveals as the first noticeable new development the appearance of extra issues—only a few at first but more frequent with the years of publication. Barrow was endeavoring to give to his readers the important news that he felt should not be held a week. This development first occurred at election time. In 1888, for example, Barrow wrote the following on his editorial page:

From this date until the day of election, the **Budget** will issue two papers a week Wednesdays and Saturdays—and a copy of each number will be sent to every tax-payer in the county, as shown by the tax list free of charge. Keep your eye on us! (III, 20, 1888)

Earlier in 1888 the owners of the **Budget** had been making plans for the establishment of a branch paper at some point in the oil country west of Douglas (II, 39, 1888). Although this project did not materialize, it was one of the things

the Barrows considered in making plans for their **Budget** to come of age.

On May 28, 1891, in the last issue of Volume V, the **Budget** announced a reduction of rates. "From this date," said the owners, "the **Budget** will be mailed to any address for \$2.00 per year." They explained further:

For four years past the price has been \$3.00 per year, and although most of the weekly papers throughout the territory were held at \$1.00 less, the **Budget's** circulation has equalled, if not exceeded, any of them. We have decided, however, that the rate is too high; that while it was in accordance with the local and sectional scale of prices existing in all branches of business at the time the paper started, it is nevertheless too high now . . .

We are still offering the *San Francisco Call* and *Philadelphia Press* as premiums—The **Budget** and either of them \$2.50 per year, or all three for \$3.00. (IV, 52, 1890)

Probably the greatest change for the **Budget** that took place through the years was improvement in its equipment and surroundings. Even before Barrow's publications were being scattered to the far points of the country, the building had undergone renovations and many new pieces of equipment had been added to the shop. As has already been noted in earlier chapters, additions and improvements were made as rapidly as space and funds permitted. In February, 1889, Barrow announced plans for still more equipment, a new job press, "much larger and better even than the one now in use—and a large assortment of new type and other aids to job-printing." (III, 38). In 1895 the **Budget** told of the placing of the steam engine on a stone base or pier, an arrangement which remains in place today with certain changes in the equipment itself. Still more machinery was added to the back room in 1899. On November 29 of that year, Barrow proudly wrote of the \$1,000 recently invested for the improvement of the **Budget** plant as follows:

The **Budget**, the past few weeks, has added to its plant, in the way of new presses, new type, and new machinery. The latest thing is a water motor, which takes the place of the small steam engine which has furnished our power for several years, and while the engine did its work well we take off our hat to the new arrival. It is always ready, runs like a sewing machine, and does all that is claimed for it and more. No more annoying delays in waiting for steam, or water in the boiler—simply turn a valve and everything is in motion. . . .

We can handle an edition of 10,000 and supply the state with stationery now, if necessary. (XIV, 26, 1899)

The **Budget** was becoming a well-established institution in the community it served and needed to give itself plenty of elbow room. As early as 1901 the building was being enlarged. "Must keep up with the procession you know,"



said Barrow on September 11, 1901 (XVI, 14). Then in 1903 talk began about the "Budget Block." Barrow himself told of these plans on August 5, 1903:

A contract was signed . . . last week for the immediate erection of the Budget block, on Third street . . . A portion of the present office building will be utilized, to which will be added an iron structure 28 x 45, with plate glass front, to occupy the vacant lot between the present building and Temple block. This will be divided into two rooms, one to be occupied as a business office for the **Budget** and the other rented as a storeroom. The front of the old and new building will be made uniform and of pleasing design and both will be covered with iron . . . The building, heating and plumbing contracts complete call for an expenditure of something over \$3,000. (XVII, 9)

After completion of these additions a portion of the building was rented for use as the Douglas post office. In 1906 the second story of the building was completed and rented to the Bell Telephone Company. Thus the owners of the **Budget** had not only improved facilities for the paper, but had provided additional sources of income for their business enterprise.

The picture of the "Budget Block" which appeared in 1907 in the Twenty-first Anniversary Edition of **Bill Barlow's Budget** revealed that the **Budget's** home had improved remarkably over its original "tar-paper-roof emporium." In 1907 Barrow felt justified in describing the block comprising 4,235 square feet of floor space as handsome, adding that the **Budget** had "one of the most complete plants in the state from the standpoint of machinery and material" to which more was constantly being added (**Bill Barlow's Budget**—Anniversary Edition, 1907). But before the **Budget** could really come of age in 1907, certain advances had to be made in quality of content as well as in quantity and quality of plant equipment.

It was not surprising that Barrow, whom no one ever charged with underrating his abilities, frequently devoted much of the **Budget's** space to eulogistic comments about his paper. In 1900, however, he confessed that he had been made to question whether the **Budget** really deserved to be praised. Appreciating a good joke on himself almost as well as a good joke on another, he related his experience in the "Chit Chat" column of the **Budget**:

About four months ago Jim Powell, of the LaPrele, blew into my den, and said he guessed he'd settle up and quit. We settled. Jim is an old-timer—a progressive up-to-date Republican ranchman, and a reader—and as I handed him a \$4.00 quit-claim deed to my interest in his broad acres and fat cattle I expressed regret that his name would no longer appear on our subscription list. To erase a \$2.00 name is like removing a pebble from a Platte river sand-bar; but I have always felt that the old-timers—who braved the dangers and privations

incident to early days and who laid the foundation on which the country of today is built—were my special clients, and to lose one of them hurts. So I asked Jim, straight-out, why he stopped the **Budget**. "Do you want me to tell you the truth?" said he. I did and said so. His reply was like him—"Because there isn't a d-d thing in it any more!" And after I had caught my second wind and mentally scanned the pages of the paper as issued during the past few months, I agreed with him. Since then, there must have been a change, for we have actually added over 200 new names to our subscription list, and we want to make it 400 before the year closes. To this end we propose to send out sample copies to non-subscribers during the next few weeks, for which no charge is made. (XIV, 14, 1900)

It is likely that for a time Barrow was preoccupied with his varied activities outside of the **Budget** office and let the paper run itself. Probably he really needed a reminder that he should be more concerned about whether the **Budget** was readable or not. It is interesting, at any rate, to observe that a definite improvement in the content of the paper took place after 1900. The editor apparently began to devote special effort to his "Chit Chat" column and to his editorials.

On April 17, 1901, for example, Barrow gave part of his editorial column to a "Chit Chat" paragraph on paint. Whether it was written to get results in Douglas or only to amuse himself and his readers, it was certainly a step in the direction of the style which he later exploited thoroughly. A part of the passage read:

Blessed, thrice blessed, is paint! From wiping the wrinkles from the downy cheek of a blushing maiden of forty summers and several winters to adorning the home of potentate and peasant, it is a renovator and beautifier. You can always feel the pulse of a community through the medium of paint. A recent trip along the Elkhorn served as an object lesson. Chadron is picking up—and painting. Whitney is as black and weatherbeaten as of yore . . . New lumber and plenty of paint tells the story. Lusk's color card proves that the town is all right, and believes, and uses paint. Douglas—well, Douglas always did paint and always will. (XV, 44, 1901)

The "Chit Chat" column of the next issue carried a little essay on the average man. Here, Barrow described cleverly the average man that the world could not get along without:

Do you know the average man? You see him alluded to in the papers and by public speakers frequently, but have you ever tried to locate him? He differs vastly from the extraordinary individual and the common plug—in being gifted with qualities possessed by neither. They develop only in the average man, and form his distinguished characteristics. For instance, the average man is one who carries a torch in the political parade and never complains when burning oil from the lamp meanders down his neck. It is a duty he owes the country. Twice or maybe three times a year the average citizen gets real drunk, and invariably lands in jail, with his coat ripped up the back. He is also the astute individual who warily watches the little

pea as it flits from shell to shell until he has the game down fine—then bets his money and loses. The average man goes out for a walk with his wife and pushes the baby carriage. Cheerfully and without ostentation he steps forward and helps hold the hot-air-balloon for the parachute jumper while the big bag is being inflated in the public square. And when the ascension is about to begin you find him in a position of trust and responsibility at the end of a guy rope. The average man attends the funeral of everybody he ever knew, and wears his glad rags on Sunday, but he is never seen on the platform with the prominent citizens at a public demonstration. Taken as a whole, the average man is a sort of chimp, anyway you fix it—but the world could not get along without him. (XV, 45, 1901)

Barrow contributed writing in this amiable, ramblingly philosophical tone to the **Budget** during the next few years. Such passages became longer and more frequent as he developed his style and assurance in the experiment he was trying. In December, 1902, just before he began in earnest to present his writings as philosophy, Barrow told a very interesting story about his first experience at a football game. The following amusing sketch appeared in the December 3, 1902, edition of the **Budget**:

Well, I have seen a football game—my first—and still live, although I lost my voice somewhere in the shuffle, and my back teeth are loose from too much "Give 'em the ax, the ax, the ax, where? Right in the neck, the neck, the neck, there" with rising inflexion and double extra emphasis on the "where" and "there." I never dreamed that a little thing like that would work me up so. Mrs. Bill asserts that for an hour and thirty-three minutes I was stark, staring mad, and they tell me that the police patrol actually legged me off the field a dozen times during the progress of the game. It was a warm one. Eleven strapping big fellows in brown, and eleven comparatively little fellows in white—God how they did fight! There were times when they looked like a box of dessicated sardines dumped onto a bread-board, and again they scattered and milled and tumbled and tossed until you couldn't see them for dust. There was a whole lot of good plays made on both sides—so they said. You can search me! I only saw our boys—little fellows from an avoidupois standpoint and therefore presumed to be the under dog—but brave, manly lads all, striving to maintain the prestige of their town—taking punishment as though they liked it, and eventually bearing our blue-and-white penant to victory. Both sides concede that it was a clean game, devoid of slugging and like dirty work. The black eyes, skinned faces, bruised legs and broken slats which our boys brought back with them are—so they explain—mere incidents which properly appertain to this sort of sport. Evidently I wasn't born to be a gridiron Gladiator. (XVIII, 26, 1902)

Four weeks later in the issue of December 31, Barrow moved his "Chit Chat" column to a less pretentious place in the center pages of the paper and gave most of the first page to what he called, "Some Cerebral Percolations which

Might Help a Little." (XVII, 30). Three weeks later he commented about the change in the following way:

Probably you've noticed that the **Budget**, of late, has been undergoing a transfiguration in both face and form—likewise growing some in stature. This issue marks a decided change in this regard—and the next will show a greater still. Meanwhile, Mrs. Bill sits smiling at the cashier's counter; and will enroll your name among the elect who feel that they ought to help a little, if you have the price—being two plunks per. And now is the accepted time—although tomorrow will do. (XVII, 33, 1903)

With Volume XVII, No. 37, appearing on February 18, 1903, Barrow inserted under the title on page one a phrase for which he was to become famous, "Sagebrush Philosophy Done Into Some Scintillating Solecisms." The columns under this heading were filled with the kind of material which in time came to characterize "Bill Barlow." Sometimes there was a story, often a moral teaching, usually a joke, occasionally a bit of current news, told, however, with a new vividness. Always there was a bit of philosophy to give what Barrow termed "social, mental, and spiritual freedom, plus —,"<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, the more commonplace and localizing captions which had appeared beneath the title of the **Budget**, such as "Only Newspaper in the Fetterman Country," "Independent in All Things," and "Largest Circulation in Central Wyoming," were changed to "Periodically Printed on Handmade Prickly-pear Papyrus," "Fair, Faithful, and Fearless," and "Sold to the Push at Five the Chunk or Two Plunks Per." "Bill Barlow" was changing the appearance and tone of the **Budget** to harmonize with the new role he was preparing to assume as "Sagebrush Philosopher."

## THE SAGEBRUSH PHILOSOPHER

Among the Douglasites of the early 1900's, there were probably those who passed quickly by the "Sagebrush Philosophy" of the **Budget's** first page and read the personal notices of the "Short Stops" column on page five just as many today by-pass the editorials and syndicated columnist to read the funnies or local society section. Some people did read Barrow's "Scintillating Solecisms," however, were impressed, and passed on to the **Budget's** editor their appreciation of the light-hearted happiness reflected in Bill Barlow's philosophy.

2. From "Bill He Believes," Inside of front cover of **Sagebrush Philosophy**, XIII, No. 4 (April, 1910).

Probably upon the suggestion of friends, Barrow began to recognize that the optimism, wit, and philosophy of the articles would take in other parts of the country. Admiring readers may even have shown him the possibilities of a monthly magazine compiled from the columns of the **Budget**. No doubt, it took little encouragement to start Barrow on his way toward the creation of such a periodical.

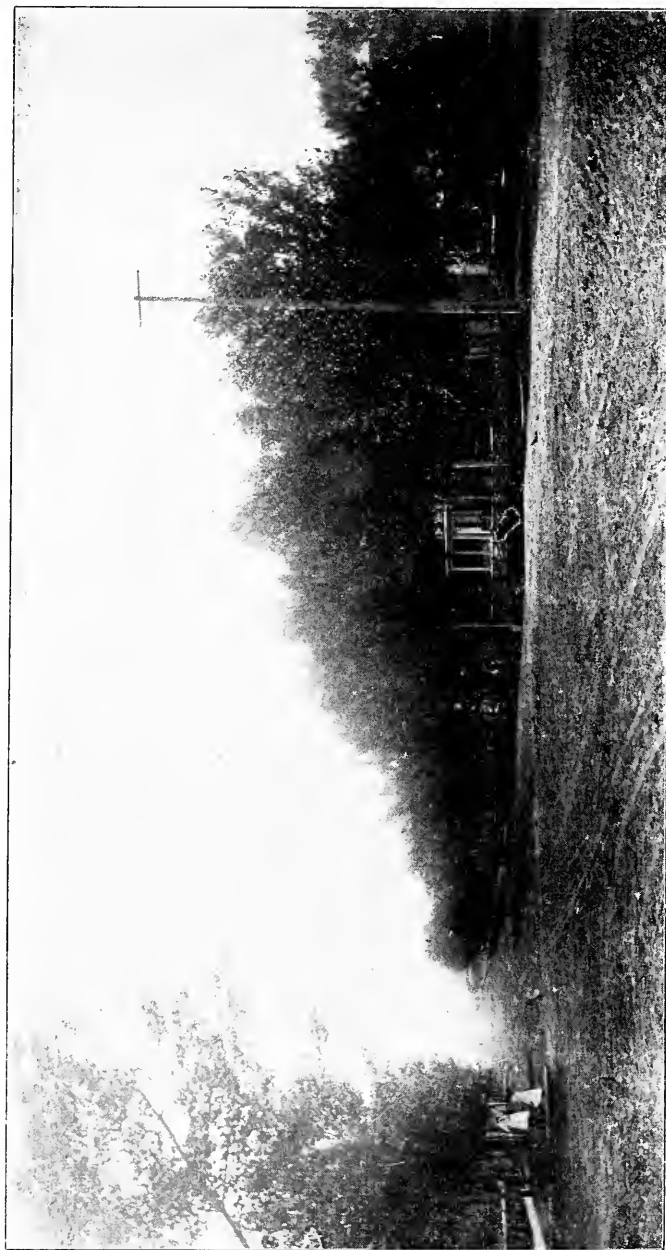
On December 9, 1903, he revealed his plan to his readers as follows:

To those among my congregation who find spiritual solace and intellectual nutriment in the pure staph which appears on this page from week to week I wish to whisper the word that I am about to launch a monthly magazine—the which will face the footlights early next month. It will be a pocket publication, handsomely printed on prickly pear papyrus, with a two-color cover on which will be emblazoned the title of “Sagebrush Philosophy.” It will comprise stuff written only to be read—a careful selection from these weekly presents, and other things as happen to percolate through the mental vertebra of the Person who vibrates at the other end of this pencil. Though really worth very much more, **Sagebrush Philosophy** will be sold at ten cents the copy to casual readers and \$1 to those who want it for a year and move right in. I would like very much to have a good audience present when this temple is completed and would suggest that while you are in the notion you might send in your name, right now, with credentials sufficient to enroll you as of the elect. And if there be others whom you believe would be benefited thereby, their names and addresses will be thankfully received—to whom a sample copy shall be sent. Now don't delay. (XVIII, 27, 1903)

The first issue of **Sagebrush Philosophy** was dated January, 1904, but it had been put in the mails in December. It measured four and three-fourths inches by six and one-fourth inches and had thirty-two pages. Since today only bound copies of that first issue are available, the appearance of the cover cannot be described accurately; however, the announcement of it in the **Budget** reported that, like later editions, it was of a rough-textured, colored paper, the color varying from one edition to another. The same words greeted the reader at the top of the first page of the text as greeted the readers of subsequent issues, “Just let this thought sorter sink into your soul: The mummy aint had no fun for moren five thousand years.”<sup>1</sup> On the cover was probably inscribed the proverb, “Live, Laugh and Love—There'll Come a Time When You Can't,” which appeared on later issues. The pages were unnumbered, were printed in quarto fashion, and may have been distributed unclipped at first. There were titles given to the various articles, but a short line was drawn between them at the middle of the

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1. Bill Barlow, **Sagebrush Philosophy**, I, 1 (Jan., 1904), p. 1.



Courtesy of the Douglas Budget

**M. C. BARROW HOME AT EXTREME RIGHT AMONG THE TREES**

page to suggest a division. The first letter of each long article was boxed in a four-line space; the jokes and maxims, which were Bill Barlow's proverbs, sometimes had only the first word in capitals and at other times appeared with the whole passage in darker type to show that a new thought was beginning. Among the articles listed in the Topical Index of that first issue were discussions of the following:

Time flies—twas New years only yesterday.

Heres a health to the god Dionysus.

Weuns sure dont like Injuns, out this way.

Bear fables—including how Windy Smith found four.

The "scintillating" content of this first issue evidently was what many readers over the country were seeking, for Barrow wrote in the January 13, 1904, issue of the **Budget** that **Sagebrush Philosophy** seemed to have caught on and added:

I had no serious intention of trying to blanket the continent with my first number; but printed what promised to be more than a plenty—and yet within ten days after the little mag had hit the mails the first edition was entirely exhausted and a second printed—to the great joy of both Mrs. Bill and Bert the Benign, who likes nothing better than to feed a voracious two-revoluter ream after ream of popular pulp done into a prickly pear papyrus. A great many good people have moved right in for a year, and newsdealers everywhere assure me that Pure Stuph is a swift seller—likewise a sure satisfyer [sic.].

To the newspaper push I tip my tile—albeit a Chicago press clipping bureau doing business on a short-order rate schedule has already boosted my somewhat attenuated bank balance over into the red. From a full half-page bouquet headed "Introducing Bill Barlow, the Elbert Hubbard of Wyoming," appearing in the Chicago **Inter Ocean** of January 3rd down to the modest four-line wood violet—each pregnant with the aroma of kindly welcome—all are noted and appreciated, and here acknowledged—until opportunity serves if ever, to repay. (XIX, 31, 1904)

By March, however, Barrow was beginning to receive unfavorable criticisms of his new style from those whom he called "well-meaning" friends. In his own defense he gave a long, rambling discussion of the "mag's" content and manner. He described the style in which his "Pure Stuph" had been written as "plain tales . . . plainly told." He explained, moreover, that "in the house of letters are many mansions, the which are constantly undergoing alteration and repair." (XIX, 39, 1904). He had substituted, he wrote, for his attempts at literary and polished passages what he called a "Saturated Solution of Scintillating Solecisms." With the development of the idea of a "Sagebrush Philosopher" Barrow had begun to experiment with devices to point up the folksy, colloquial quality of the "wisdom" he was offering his readers. He deliberately misspelled, ran words together, attempted to represent an uneducated

pronunciation, as in "suthin," "moren," "handlin," omitted apostrophes in contractions, and filled his sketches with slang and colloquialisms. These peculiarities no doubt displeased many readers and probably provoked criticism, but Barrow defended his material and method vigorously. "It is my purpose to be truthful, to portray life as you and I both see it, despite the hysterical mustnt-touch screams of thin skins." He pointed out that "slang, bretheren, is at times the vehicle through which the good work can be accomplished—the nude in Literature" and that "Language either spoken or printed must be thought itself without domino or other dampfool disguise."

Barrow had a good deal to learn about how to make the **Sagebrush Philosophy** a financial success. He first obtained the names of news-stand operators all over the country, picked a few news agencies in the more thickly populated areas, and sent them sample copies of the initial **Sagebrush Philosophy**. In some cases he sent as many as fifty copies of the new publication, and, according to one of Barrow's letters written on July 22, 1904, one-half of these were released as samples for free distribution. Here, he added that the "entire lot might be so considered if necessary—it being our desire to introduce the publication and induce you to handle it for us in the future."<sup>2</sup>

Barrow sent glowingly phrased letters of announcement along with the first packets of his magazine which were distributed. The replies, which he soon began to receive, made him realize, no doubt, that the distribution of a periodical was not as easy as he had thought. The head office of the American News Company in New York must have written back to Barrow, for example, explaining in a courteous manner how news agencies functioned; for an answer to them is found in Barrow's **Copy Book** under date of January 8, 1904. Among other things Barrow included the following in this letter:

I . . . assure you that your suggestion as to the disposal of copies sent you as samples has our full approval, I have today written your branch house at Denver enclosing your letter, and trust that within a few days we will reach a satisfactory arrangement under which we may be able to send you the magazine hereafter.

Sagebrush Philosophy is a winner. Chicago, Omaha, New York, and Washington papers have paid it some very handsome compliments, as well as every prominent paper published in the Rocky Mountain region.<sup>3</sup>

2. "Letter to Brentano," Chicago, Illinois, Jan. 22, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 29.

3. "Letter to American News Company," New York, N. Y., Jan. 8, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 2.



A similar letter was sent to the Washington News Company, which apparently had also written that Barrow contact the News Company branch in Colorado. Barrow immediately wrote to the Colorado News Company, hoping to work out as soon as possible some way of putting his new contribution before the reading public. He reported the extent of his sales to date and told them that there were more orders for the January number than could be filled, although 1,500 more copies were being printed to fill orders received.<sup>4</sup>

After writing to this company and asking that an arrangement be settled upon, it was necessary for Barrow to write to the other news agencies that he had approached with his letter accompanying sample copies. He explained that he had contacted a branch of the American News Company to distribute his magazine but assured the other news companies that he was still in the market.<sup>5</sup> As Barrow received more correspondence from the various news agencies, he learned that as in any other business the middle man wanted his cut. In his case, he felt that the amount requested by the agencies was too great and would not leave a large enough margin of profit for the individual news-stand operators.

The review of the magazine in the Chicago **Inter-Ocean** had been at the first the best instrument of Barrow's sales talk; however, he later capitalized on his direct contact with the dealers. He always let the dealers know that he was really doing them a favor by sending his little "bibliomag" directly to them.

Although we have about twenty type-written pages from the American and other news companies now on file in our office, in which they ask the exclusive sale of the mag. with a 2c rakeoff which the retailer must pay, we have decided to pass them up for the present and deal direct with the retailer only.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile the editor of the **Budget** was not being altogether frank with the Colorado News Company. While continuing to contact prospective customers directly about ordering the magazine, he wrote the following contradictory statement to the Colorado Branch of the American News Company:

... We have not yet decided about the agency business. The fact is that the Mag. has had such phenomenal—or unexpected, we might say—sales that we cannot broaden our field until we

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4. "Letter to Colorado News Company," Denver, Colorado, Jan. 8, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 4.

5. **Ibid.**, Jan. 11, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 10.

6. "Letter to Brentano," Chicago, Illinois, Jan. 22, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 28.

install a new book press and other machinery necessary to handle it, hence we are in the unique position of being compelled to close our doors, almost, to other than old customers. When we get ready to spread out—as we will as soon as possible—we will write you.<sup>7</sup>

Barrow wrote more and more letters asking over and over, "Can you handle any Februarys, and how many of March shall we send you when out? Please examine the publication and let us hear from you." and "We are printing something as handsome as type and ink can make; distinctly western and unique in both makeup and meat."<sup>8</sup> Always he declared that the first edition was exhausted within a fortnight, and that a second had been printed. In some cases he even maintained that the second was also gone. At one time he said that the first edition had numbered 5,000.<sup>9</sup> Six months later he wrote that the initial edition had numbered 2,000.<sup>10</sup> Since many of these first issues were used as free samples, Barrow was of course not being accurate or even honest when he used the number printed as a measure of the magazine's popularity. He probably felt, however, that some exaggeration was necessary for good salesmanship.

Later in 1904, the tone of Barrow's publicity letters was distinctly changed. This was possibly an attempt to arouse or interest those dealers who had not replied to Barrow's first letters. To the Railroad News Company of Boston, Barrow wrote:

We . . . have had no word from you as to how sales are going. We have secured quite a number of subscribers in Boston, however, and they write us that when wanting extra copies of several issue they have been unable to get them at any of your news stands.

SAGEBRUSH PHILOSOPHY is gaining circulation by leaps and bounds—every dealer who handles it, almost, having doubled and trebled his order with each issue. Many have jumped from 10 to 100 and others have even exceeded this increase. Why have we not heard from you along this line?

A Boston friend writes us that you have many news stands, and in his opinion ought to easily sell 500 copies a month—possibly more. At his solicitation we are writing you—also sending you this mail 50 copies of the May issue.<sup>11</sup>

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7. "Letter to Colorado News Company," Denver, Colorado, Jan. 29, 1904, *Copy Book*, p. 34.

8. "Letter to Wakoff Brothers," Park Row Bldg., N. Y. City, Feb. 19, 1904, *Copy Book*, p. 46.

9. "Letter to Colorado News Company," Denver, Colorado, Jan. 8, 1904, *Copy Book*, p. 4.

10. "Letter to Allrupp & Chappell," Little Rock, Arkansas, June 18, 1904, *Copy Book*, p. 53.

11. "Letter to Railroad News Company," Boston, Mass. May 7, 1904, *Copy Book*, p. 51.

Still another approach to salesmanship was employed in June, 1904, when in an answer to a news-stand proprietor in Little Rock, Arkansas, Barrow expressed pleasure in being able to get back numbers which his correspondent had evidently been unable to sell.<sup>12</sup> Barrow explained that there were constant applications for issues out of print and that he and his staff had just been unable to supply the many requests.

Even more unusual correspondence followed. A letter, dated July 23, 1904, included an example of Barrow's next experiment as publicity man for his magazine. Here he wrote to an unsuccessful distributor that he and "Mrs. Bill" would be saved from suicide if the old issues could be bundled up and "fired in," and as a rousing finale added:

Don't forget the Junes. Aprils are worth \$1.00 each, but of course you haven't got any. We didn't know what we were up against at first and didn't print enough—but are catching on.<sup>13</sup>

By May 31, 1905, Barrow was informing readers of his **Budget** that he had reached a circulation for June of 12,000 copies and that orders already showed an increase for July to at least 15,000. A few months earlier on March 15, 1905, he had written to the Colorado News Company asking that a contract be prepared and sent to him. He evidently had decided that one man could not handle so many phases of a periodical's publication and asked the company to send him, in addition to the contract, such suggestions as their experience dictated for gaining circulation.<sup>14</sup>

As the subscription list grew and as Barrow publicized its growth, advertisers, no doubt, began to investigate the magazine's possibilities as an advertising medium. W. H. Greenfield of Philadelphia in 1904, according to existing records, was the first to approach Barrow on this matter. The Sagebrush Philosopher informed him that no effort was being made to get advertising and that he did not desire any until the magazine's circulation had grown from 7,000 to 10,000. But Barrow added that by the end of the year this mark should be reached, at which time a rate card asking for advertising business would be sent out. He also quoted to Greenfield the price of \$10.00 a page, assuring him, however, that the price was just a "mouth to mouth" agreement and likely to be increased at any time.<sup>15</sup>

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12. "Letter to Allrupp and Chappell," Little Rock, Arkansas, June 18, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 53.

13. "Letter to Dailey," July 23, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 60.

14. "Letter to Colorado News Company," Denver, Colorado, March 31, 1905, **Copy Book**, p. 102.

15. "Letter to W. H. Greenfield, Esq.," Philadelphia, Penn., Sept. 3, 1904, **Copy Book**, p. 73.

Then in 1907, Barrow asked the Oliver Typewriter Company for a new machine in exchange for a three-month full page advertisement. It is not known whether he was able to make his bargain with this proposal, but, his "sales talk" was convincing:

**SAGEBRUSH PHILOSOPHY** is "The olive of Lucullan literature"—pungent, but always palatable. It is the essence of current comment, plainly expressed and handsomely printed—deals with life as you see it and humanity as you know it—never a knocker—always an optimist. It is written to read, and we believe has a greater circulation based on actual copies printed than any other publication—is invariably passed about the home or office, and then carried in the pocket until handed to a friend and by him or her to others—because always of interest.

We have refused all advertising until we had gained a circulation; but now feel that we have reached that point where we are justified in urging our claims to a limit of thirty pages based on rate card herewith. And, as I have said, we want another Oliver, and to that end make you the special offer of a full page for three months in exchange for one of your machines.<sup>16</sup>

Barrow's untiring efforts toward wide publicity seemed to bring results, but there must also have been something appealing in the philosophy itself. Although certain portions of Bill Barlow's philosophy may have seemed coarse to some, the magazine was read from its comments on news, to its critical discussions, philosophical ramblings, and presentations of helpful maxims and proverbs.<sup>17</sup>

Since Barrow began his philosophizing by commenting on news of interest in a clever and unusual way, it might be well to consider this phase of his magazine material first. The news between the covers of **Sagebrush Philosophy**, like the critical discussions, proverbs, jokes, etc., appearing in Bill Barlow's monthly magazine, was also included in the "Scintillating Solecisms" published weekly on the first page of the **Budget**.

In September, 1906, Barrow reported in his magazine that the members of the First Methodist Church of Groveport, Ohio, had suffered a shock the other day from which they would not soon recover. He wrote that their original church had been built back in 1859 when a corner-stone containing a Bible and compilation of local church history was laid with a great deal of ceremony. They had planned to deposit these relics in the corner-stone of a new church under construction, but:

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16. "Letter to Oliver Typewriter Co.," Chicago, Illinois, March 5, 1907, **Copy Book**, p. 129.

17. Rice, Interview, Douglas, Wyoming, March, 1948.

Imagine the horror of pastor and brethren who had assembled to recover the precious relics to discover, when the old stone gave up its contents, that it had held all these years—instead of holy and local writ—a greasy pack of cards, a battered tobacco box, a faded photograph of an altogether fairy and an empty booze bottle. It was evident that at some stage of the original corner stone deal, some sinner in jocular mood had switched decks.<sup>18</sup>

From this introduction Barrow went into a lengthy dissertation on superstition as a competing factor in everyday life, using as example the superstition of the surprised and stricken people in Groveport.

In another news item Barrow spoke of John D. Rockefeller's announcement that he would give money toward a home and school for chorus girls. Using this item as a kind of text, the Sagebrush Philosopher went into a long and certainly not dull discussion of the chorus girl.<sup>19</sup> Billy Sunday, well-known evangelist of Barrow's day, was the subject of another of Barrow's comments on current news. In June, 1910, the Sagebrush Philosopher reported that Sunday was scheduled to make over the town of Everett, Washington. This bit of news, although not especially a scoop, became interesting and readable when told by Barrow:

Sunday is understudied by a high-salaried apostle named Gill who in strict accord with Barnumesque ethics is already on the ground joyously prophecyng the reclamation of full 3,000 souls as result of his principal's labor of love and lucre. Everett may need a housecleaning all right; but after Sunday has pocketed his fee and made his getaway, the local clergy and congregations, including a well laundried proletariat, will have gotten onto some new wrinkles anent reform.<sup>20</sup>

Barrow's criticism of contemporary writers had much the same tone as his editorials on local newspapers. His comments on one of the victims in this category, William Allen White, are of interest. In 1905 Barrow wrote the following of White:

That dread disease known to the profesh as literary polish has swept the poor cuss into the maelstrom of common-place space writers, whose work is really no better nor worse than the best, and absolutely devoid of that individuality which was once a gleaming lighthouse in a fatuous fog. (XX, Feb. 8, 1905)

The Sagebrush Philosopher consistently threw laurels, however, to writers past and present who were "fair, faithful, and fearless."

18. Bill Barlow, *Sagebrush Philosophy*, VI, No. 3 (Sept., 1906).

19. *Sagebrush Philosophy*, VI, No. 3 (Sept., 1906).

20. *Sagebrush Philosophy*, XIII, No. 61 (June, 1910).

In formulating a reply to the adverse comments on the language of his "mag," Barrow used his knowledge of the great writers of the past:

What a world of hypocrites we are anyway, in this matter of literature. Nobody ever heard an oration on the subject without some reference in it to "the immortal Bard of Avon," and yet few people can honestly read and enjoy him. Milton is deified as one of the world's greatest poets, and yet it is true that a large proportion of the educated men and women of today take his "Paradise Lost" on trust, and have not read it. John Bunyan belongs to the same class—how many of you have waded through "Pilgrims Progress?" We praise because tradition tells us we must, just as we recognize many other superstitions which have come to us through the centuries. And yet while we profess an admiration verging on veneration for a score or more of old-time authors whose work hangs high in the temple of fame, how carefully we have revamped and sandpapered some of their productions in order to bring them within the limits of present-day literary censorship. (XIX, 51, 1904)

He grieved over the "latent laxity of mind" which led some of his readers to "carnal rather than moral conclusions," and took advantage of an opportunity to review the unsavory qualities of the immortals of literature in hopes that it would make people understand better that any "word bears different definitions and interpretations."

Shakespeare was a libertine, Coleridge a dope-dipper, Poe a booze-fighter for fair, Burns a profligate and pothouse bum, Byron had as many mistresses as he could manage . . . yet these trifling idiosyncracies of their day did not prevent the perpetuation of their genius on the pages of history. It is admitted that each was a great teacher along certain lines, and that the world is wiser and better because they once lived, and yet were they on earth today they would be classed as degenerates and much of their best work denounced and damned. (XIX, 51, 1904)

In 1906 Barrow wrote that Smollett and Fielding and Boccaccio practiced what they preached, that the family matters of Shakespeare were "deucedly irregular," and that the life of Swift would have been refused by even the "high-class, low-priced magazine." He added that George Eliot was a "shameless hussy according to smug measurement" and mentioned Villon as a "rascally chest and pothouse brawler."<sup>21</sup>

Barrow's criticisms of what the drama of his day did to literature are very readable. He wrote how he had once loved *Ben Hur*, had taken it off the shelf with reverence, and had spent hours "in the tent of Sheik, or in the deserted arena of the circus of Antioch where the proud Roman was humbled by the powers of the Jew." (XIX, 49, 1906). He

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21. Sagebrush Philosophy, VI, No. 2 (Aug. 1906).

added, however, that he had seen the play and could never again pick up the book without hearing:

the rumble and roar of that devilish mechanical race-track on which Messala and Ben-Hur did their stunt; the skeleton of the story as paraded on the stage glaring at me from between every line—all the beauty and pathos of the tale lost in whit-tling it down to a peg to fit a hole. (XIX, 49, 1904)

Barrow made the comment on **Ben Hur** by way of preface to a remark or two concerning Owen Wister's Wyoming story, **The Virginian**, which he had recently seen produced on a Chicago stage. He described in picturesque detail the Virginian as he had known him—of his consumption of whiskey straight, his grammar which was "most in gen'l salted with enough biblical Tabasco to give it both pith and point," and his fondness for the four-card-flush. Of the **Virginian** on the Chicago stage, however, Barrow wrote:

The cuss I met in Chicago who pretended to be our old pard was a low-down, cotton-chewin, Montgomery & Ward representative and thats the answer! Though evidently suffering from a thirst born of the night before he never took a drink during the progress of the play which appeared to lap over a good many months. Think of a cowboy on a water way, men and women of Wyoming, and weep! And his grammar! I have heard Chicago as she is spoke, have interpreted Hoboken, slowly sifted St. Louis through my cerebellum, digested the Frisco dialect and bearded the bean-eater in his very lair; but all these are as primal understudies beside the land-laundried lingo which this rooster lifted over the footlights. It was Ladies Home Journal delicatessen, with an oratorical orchid chucked in here, and a long-stemmed orthographical Beaut at \$12 the doz. pinned on there—and never a rib-roastin persuader appearin in the entire procession.

Some years later he defended James Henry Stark for "Doing things to the hiatus of some American heroes in his book," **The Loyalists of Massachusetts, and the Other Side of the American Revolution**, and maintained that Stark was "neither subsidized muckraker nor yellow sensationalist."<sup>22</sup>

Barrow's philosophical comments on everything and anything in general may have made by far the most interesting reading for the people of his day. These portions of **Sagebrush Philosophy** and the "Scintillating Solecisms" of the **Budget** included rambling sketches and comments about Christmas, friendship, wickedness and religious intolerance, the naivete of youth, the cowboy's appreciation of Shakespeare, the love of the world for a sinner, human sentiment, praise of western women, etc. Most of these articles were six to eight pages long but made interesting reading in spite of their loose connections and irrelevancies.

22. **Sagebrush Philosophy**, XIII, No. 4 (April, 1910).

Barrow's article on Christmas in 1904 was especially revealing because of his background. He wrote that of all the events of earth "since historians first began to trim the lamps of imperishable records," the Nazarene's "life and death whether viewed as mortal, or myth, fable or fact, must be accepted as the most momentous to society."

In an age of strife He came preaching peace, in an age of violence and brutal oppression He taught charity and forgiveness; in an age of bestial licentiousness He declared that man must live rightly if he would be happy—who, unlettered and ignorant of laws, drafted a moral code from which neither seer or sage can erase word or line without marring its perfect beauty; who while living a persecuted life wreathed the world in smiles and preached only good-will to men. . . . Hence the anniversary of His birth—whether admitted or denied—may well be observed as opportunity for the expression of that kindly feeling which is more and more manifest in humanity as the years pass. (XX, 26, 1904)

If Barrow's "Sagebrush Philosophizing" can be accepted as personal, his comments on wickedness may explain the basis of his standard of morality and in turn explain why others often looked at him askance. He expressed his belief that wickedness was more "a matter of opportunity and environment than of moral pervert." (XX, 3, 1904). He maintained that deliberate wrong-doing was rare and that "sin was usually the child of weak self-indulgence, thoughtless omission and commission, or light-headed folly—and not infrequently the accidental consequence of a over-enthusiastic attempt to do good." (XX, 3, 1904).

In August, 1906, Barrow wrote "Somehow, the world loves a sinner—particularly if his transgressions lie along certain lines—and why?"<sup>23</sup> He explained this by saying that there was the "instinct of the brute to seize his prey" in every human heart. He even suggested that in every one there was an inborn racial tendency to transgress and that this might be why humanity loved the sinner and made light of his offenses. To put across his point, the Sagebrush Philosopher wrote of the loveable and prominent people of history and literature, who lacked virtue in one way or another: Columbus, Washington, Oliver Cromwell, and others, and ended his article by showing how all the world loved the sinners in literature and even admired the unsavory qualities of their creators.

In 1910 Barrow praised the western woman and attempted to dissolve the myth built around her by the "rape-ridden imagination of the novelist and playwright."<sup>24</sup> He wrote:

23. Sagebrush Philosophy, VI, No. 2 (Aug., 1906).

24. Sagebrush Philosophy, XIV, No. 2 (Aug., 1910).



... There have been heroines in the west, as everywhere—willing to sacrifice life itself if need be in the defense of honor, ... The west, too, has its society of cities and towns and localities, regardless if need be that the nearest ranch is twenty miles away ... Our afternoon teas are confessedly lacking in empty gabble and eye glasses—there is a dearth of vulgar small talk and ornate display—and yet these are women who know their world, who read the newspapers and best magazines, who can discuss plays and operas they've never seen but know much about nevertheless, who vote intelligently and I believe far more conscientiously than their liege lords, and yet in thought and sentiment and hopes and aspirations are the same wives and mothers who from the beginning have rocked the cradles of the world ... behold the western woman.<sup>25</sup>

Scattered in between the longer passages of philosophizing were jokes and proverbs meant both to amuse and teach. They dealt with love, wickedness, dishonesty, and other human attributes. Some of these bordered on obscenity, and others could have been accepted by the most pious people of Barrow's day. Here as in all phases of the magazine, Barrow gave "Some Pure Stuph Including Some Long Shots at Sin the Which Was Written to Read," the notice of which appeared on the first page of every issue. From the many proverbs and witticisms of Bill Barlow, the Sagebrush Philosopher, the following have been taken at random as examples:

Happiness is a divine Heritage and no less a duty—learn a lesson from the mummy who hasnt had any fun for moren 5,000 years.

Neat fitting shoes and black hose will catch more flirtatious flies than a ton of paint and powder.

I want no other tribute in life nor epitaph after—I am willing to be both judged and remembered—by the enemies I have made.

Ambition is still climbing that mountain—but in the modern version it is only the foolish braggart who flourishes a flag.

As man thinketh in his heart so is he as concerns his age—as woman looketh in the face, she am.

To fret is to fear—and real trouble waits around the corner always for the coward and cur.

Give freely to your friends of such virtues as you possess—not forgetting, likewise and always, to profit by the ill will of enemies who, as is barely possible, do sometimes tell the truth.

Genius is not a pot of gold buried neath a friendly rainbow and possessed whether or no by whoever stumbles onto the treasure. Tis painstaking observation and understanding, cleverly elaborated in the woof of hard work.

Better to make yourself beloved than feared.

The morning cocktail is the banana peel on which so many slip when setting out on the path of reformation.

Announcement is made through a fashion-plate publication that long, loose cloaks will be the style this winter. More trouble for the stork. How will he know where he is expected?

25. Ibid.

First, always, is the wish to be happy—after, maybe, the folly of becoming wise.

These various presentations of philosophy and humor combined to make up the little "mag" which Bill Barlow sent to the public each month. Barrow had an ingratiating way of telling a story. He added a touch of suggestion of scandal to many stories and made others seem unusual even though the incident may have been very ordinary or the joke one in current circulation. It might be said that he approached some of his articles in reverse; often he began by writing about nothing in particular and suddenly applied his philosophizing to some definite incident or idea. He played with words and made new combinations to express his ideas more adequately. Of his curious spelling he wrote:

Anent the threatened spelling reform—if you find any symptoms of it in the Philos., it is because the proof-reader ought to be fired.<sup>26</sup>

Barrow took the fancies and prejudices of an ordinary human being and made of them reading material for both optimist and pessimist. Although **Sagebrush Philosophy** contained ideas with practical applications for everyday people, the way the ideas were expressed sometimes left the reader wondering whether he should be shocked or amused.

Possibly Barrow picked up some of his stylistic tricks from Bill Nye, but he could hardly be said to have been influenced chiefly by Nye. Chaplin wrote that Barrow subscribed for the **Iconoclast** of Brann and the **Philistine** of Elbert Hubbard.<sup>27</sup> Barrow took suggestions, in all likelihood, from these publications, but he had ability and individuality in his own right.

In the 1890's William Cowper Brann, journalist and lecturer, published the **Iconoclast** at Waco, Texas. In this periodical he gave "violent and often unconventional treatment to the moral and social problems of his day."<sup>28</sup> He became notorious in his time because of this, but his scope was much narrower than Barrow's; and in his attempt to cure the world of what ailed it, he tried to make every man think as he thought.

There is considerable resemblance between Elbert Hubbard and Barrow as men and as writers and philosophers.<sup>29</sup>

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26. **Sagebrush Philosophy**, VI, No. 4 (Oct., 1906).

27. Letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

28. J. D. Hart, **The Oxford Companion to American Literature** (London, N. Y., Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 90.

29. The impressions given here of Elbert Hubbard were gained through study of the following book: Felix Shay, **Elbert Hubbard of East Aurora** (New York: William H. Wise & Co., 1926).

They had similar attitudes on many things, shared certain hobbies, and loved telling stories at their own expense. As writers they were both influenced by the Bible and used many expressions from it in their writing. Both wrote one-man magazines filled with smart sayings and commonplace philosophy; both claimed to be writing for those who could discern their irony and enjoy it.

Of the many laudatory letters received by Bill Barlow, some included remarks which compared the Sagebrush Philosopher with Elbert Hubbard. Portions of these letters from appreciative readers were published from time to time in the **Budget** under one of the following headings: "Breezy Bouquets in Big Bunches," or "Some Posies Hand-ed the Mag." They came from Florida, Pennsylvania, Iowa, California, Texas, Illinois, Nebraska, Georgia, Colorado, New York, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Winnipeg Manitoba, Nassau, and the Bahamas. A reader from Omaha wrote, "It is just the thing—excelling the **Philistine**, **Iconoclast**, and all others along that line." (XX, 17, 1904). From Augusta Georgia, came the prediction that "**Sagebrush Philosophy** will run the **Philistine** out of business down this way." (XX, 17, 1904). A newspaper in Elmira, New York, the **Telegram**, wrote:

Bill Barlow has won a front place in journalism in this country and his fame is not confined to the east nor the west. He has secured it because he knows when, where, and how to write his "hot stufh." . . . In style and makeup **Sagebrush Philosophy** is an attractive little magazine and . . . withal possessed of a breeziness that is pleasing and captivating. It is of about the size of Elbert Hubbard's **Philistine** and in a short time is certain to be famous and as much sought for. (XX, April 26, 1905)

In early issues of **Sagebrush Philosophy** Barrow himself had a statement to make about what he was attempting. He wrote:

That your Pastor makes no pretentions to literary style, polish or ability; has no hunch he will live in book-lore legend, nor does he hope to write anything that has not been evolved from the mind of man again and again since Adam first made his mark. But this maglet is Bill's—to fill its pages his joy and his privilege—and so long as health and pencil last every line of Refined Rot therein appearing will be his. It will lack, of course, the finish and lustre—the hyphenated heaviness which attaches to six sawbucks the column and no cutback—but it will be Pure Stufh, written to read—designed to amuse and entertain—with the wide world and its ways for a text and "Live, laugh, and love" as the theme—the which is offered at ten cents the chunk or One William to those who want it for a year and move right in.<sup>30</sup>

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30. This appeared on back of title page of issues through 1906.

Although he told his readers that to fill the pages of his magazine was "his joy and pleasure," his associates maintain that "To write this magazine once a month was quite a task." Barrow told Chaplin, for example, "that it was his custom to take a bottle of whiskey and a pot of black coffee and write the magazine at a single sitting."<sup>31</sup> This might indicate that he found philosophizing to order something of a chore; certainly to turn out an issue at one sitting required a brain which "moved with great rapidity under pressure."<sup>32</sup>

In his later years Barrow did most of his writing at a large ranch home built west of the Platte River, not far from Douglas. "He had a fine team of horses . . . and enjoyed going to his office and back to this good home."<sup>33</sup>

At this home on October 9, 1910, the Sagebrush Philosopher died at the age of fifty-three. His death was caused directly by heart failure, but his strenuous life and concentrated work were contributing factors. His funeral was the biggest in Douglas history, and flowers, telegrams, and letters, as well as admirers themselves, came to Douglas from all areas into which Bill Barlow had spread his philosophy. Some Douglas residents remember that all school children were dismissed for the funeral. Each one was given a carnation, then was lifted up to see the deceased, and allowed to place his flower on the casket. The children marched as a part of the funeral procession from the Unity Temple to the cemetery, and one of them remembers today how the event impressed her—awe mixed with a bit of humor—a procession so solemn and yet ridiculous to a child whose most vivid recollection of it is an image of a corpulent Mason with a wooden Bible rack over his shoulder and a big stomach in front.<sup>34</sup>

Readers all over the country responded in different ways to news of Barrow's death. Some sent letters of condolence; others wrote verses, sincere in sentiment though pretty poor as poetry, like the following by H. R. Drummond:

Bill Barlow's gone. His work, unfinished, stands to mark the  
place

Where he laid down his tools to meet his Master face to face.

Gauge, gavel, plum, square level, trowel, all tools are cast aside  
Clad in white gloves and apron Bill has crossed the Great

Divide.

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31. Chaplin, letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

32. "Obituary" **Bill Barlow's Budget**, Oct. 12, 1910.

33. Chaplin, letter to author, Jan. 1, 1947.

34. Related to the author, March, 1948, by a Douglas woman who prefers to remain unidentified.

His comrades mourn, their prayers ascend to that Great Architect.

To grant them strength and cunning so that their hands may erect

A tablet to his memory—one that this message sends

To all the world—Bill Barlow's here,

God bless him. "He had friends."<sup>35</sup>

All who had read and appreciated Bill Barlow's **Sagebrush Philosophy** knew that it had been a "creature purely of his brain and could not survive."<sup>36</sup> The magazine was discontinued after the publication of two issues after his death; the last was a memorial edition.

In 1903 Barrow had described the Wyoming newspaperman in his "Sagebrush Philosophy" column:

The Wyoming newspaper man is an optimist, if there ever was one. Even in his sober moments—and he has 'em—he see things. Given a country store or two at an isolated cross-roads and he builds a city; . . . a forty-dollar addition to your modest shack makes it a mansion, and his town is the only town, and the best ever. He is always willing to fudge a little in handling cold facts, and as prophet he simply skunks Elijah and all his ilk. . . . Of necessity he is sometimes a liar; but to sorter toy with the truth in prophetic spirit for the good of the country or community in which he lives is with him a labor of love, and by reason of a special dispensation granted him direct from Deity, these trifling idiosyncracies [sic.] which we of the profesh term "essential errors" are not charged up against him in the Big Book. In many cases he is snubbed and sinned against—by the man who has mental mumps, the mossback and the miser—of whom we do have a few rare specimens . . .

. . . He's not a whiner—he must set the pace if you please, and he most in gen'l does.

The Wyoming newspapermen, Barrow also wrote, are those:

who print a book each year wherein is written a history of their locality; who don't print all the news, thank God, but with wise discretion make a record of births, deaths and marriages, social events and business and industrial enterprises, wherein naught is set down in malice and much is given the benefit of the doubt. And when in the course of human events it becomes necessary to remove the professional pale—the Wyoming newspaper man does the job decently, and without undue shedding of blood. And when he sets out to paint the rose for you, his pencil can cough up colors they've never yet been able to find in the kaleidoscope. (XIX, 19, 1903)

In his description of Wyoming newspapermen Barrow told his own story well. His is only one story among many that could be told. The frontier newspapermen who suc-

35. Copied from papers which had belonged to Mrs. M. C. Barrow, now in the possession of Roy Combs, Douglas, Wyoming.

36. Chaplin, Laramie **Republican**, Daily Edition, April 24, 1918.

ceeded were of necessity "men of strong character," as Chaplin put it,<sup>37</sup> but there were only a few like Barrow who with genius and a touch of audacity reached out of the West and commanded the attention and admiration of the reading public in other parts of the world.

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37. "Early Wyoming Newspapers," Laramie **Republican**, Daily Edition, April 11, 1918.

# *The Road of Yesteryear*

## Lights and Shadows in the Life of the Methodist Church in Basin.

By M. B. RHODES\*



METHODIST CHURCH IN BASIN, 1906

TO THE MEMORY of Reverend Lewis C. Thompson, pioneer preacher in the Big Horn Basin, organizer and builder of churches, known and respected far and wide for his commendable attributes as minister and man, this work is dedicated in recognition and appreciation.

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\*Marvin B. Rhodes was born on January 8, 1874, at Palmyra, Missouri. He obtained his education in the public school and Ingleside College, Palmyra, and West Plains Academy, Missouri. In 1897 he was married to Mazie Darr at Edgemont, South Dakota. A son, Paul, died in infancy; a daughter, Ruth, now Mrs. W. F. Petrausch, resides in Thermopolis.

Mr. Rhodes came to Wyoming in the winter of 1900. Between the years 1892-1922 he was connected with five different banks, in Missouri, Wyoming, and California, one of which was the Big Horn County Bank at Basin, 1900-1910. From 1910-1914 he was the receiver of the U. S. Land Office at Lander, and during 1923-1931 he was cashier of the Pacific Department of the Hartford Fire Insurance Company at San Francisco. During World War II he was for three years a mechanic in one of the Kaiser shipyards at St. John's, Oregon. Mr. Rhodes is living in Basin at the present time.

### THE STREET CALLED ALDERSGATE

The lights were dim and the way was long,  
But with manly purpose, high and strong,  
He, his feet urged on by fate,  
His whole mind centered on sober thought  
Of his efforts that had come to naught,  
Reached a house where Godly things were taught,  
In the street called Aldersgate.

And a man read there from Luther's book,  
Of peace that comes when to Christ we look,  
Our lives to ameliorate;  
Not dreaming, as he diffused the light,  
That its radiance would glow more bright;  
That history would be made that night  
In the street called Aldersgate.

The stranger listened, as was his part,  
Felt a surge of warmth swell in his heart,  
Felt it with joy palpitate.  
And he cast aside his weight of care,  
For he trusted Christ to save him there  
In the house built on that thoroughfare;  
In the street called Aldersgate.

Now, two-hundred years and more have gone,  
But the soul crusade still marches on  
With a zeal naught can abate.  
Though millions honor that convert's name  
Whose work for God brought undying fame,  
Not many know that the blessing came  
In the street called Aldersgate.

Nor does history tell us, today,  
Who read from the book that showed the way;  
Heaven will that one compensate.  
Still today, "perfect love casts out fear";  
God, give us the will to make it clear,  
Like the one whose words caught Wesley's ear  
In the street called Aldersgate.

### FOREWORD

This writer offers no brief for churches; they need none. Ever since the historic landing on a rock-bound coast Christianity has been basic in our American way of life.

This is the story of a church, a small-town western church and the road over which it has come during its



almost half-century of existence, its beginning, struggles and vicissitudes, its errors, failures and achievements, the material prosperity which has come to it and its place in the life of the community.

The story follows somewhat the pattern of the official church history, completed two years ago by the same author, although there are differences. The official history, having been intended primarily for the local Methodist congregations, present and future, much of it, because it would be of interest to them only, has been omitted from this one, thus materially shortening it. The remainder has been more or less diluted in its essence in order to adapt it to general reading.

A feature of both this and the official history is the inclusion of much contemporary early local history, in as much as the church and the community have virtually grown up together; a mere recital of events unaccompanied by a background or delineation of the conditions under which they occurred or the causes leading to them is dull.

The writer, named for a great bishop of the Methodist Church and nurtured in that church in more ways than one, found no Methodist organization when he came to Basin many years ago. Before long he united with another denomination and his interest in Methodist affairs promptly ceased; yet, the community having been small, it was inevitable that many things would come under his observation.

Three years ago, his wife being in feeble health, and the Methodist Church being directly across the street, they returned to the faith of their youth. Two days later the pastor, Rev. T. Stacy Riddick, requested him to write the history of the church.

If nothing more than membership rolls, treasurers' reports and minutes of board meetings were required, almost anyone could write church history; but the fact cannot be escaped that the real annals must come from the memory or memories of some person or persons. In the present instance this writer was the only living person who remembered all or most of it; and thus he consented, realizing that otherwise a complete and comprehensive history would never be written.

He has borne in mind that he set himself to the task of writing annals, not romance or fiction, and thus he has written frankly, though in some instances with restraint.

## THE OLD ORDER

A story went around several years ago about a pious old lady who came west to visit one of her married children. The day she arrived, or perhaps it was the next day, she said to a little grandson "Go bring me the dear old Book." The boy, anxious to please grandma, hurried away, and returning presently, handed her a Sears-Roebuck catalog.

The story may be pure fiction. But if it is true, this writer does not know where or when the incident occurred. Alas, it could have happened recently in our own community; but the story more nearly reflects the spiritual state of the majority of the people in the Big Horn Basin fifty-five to sixty years ago.

They (speaking of the majority) were not outlaws; they did not come a few jumps ahead of a sheriff; they had their own reasons for coming, "even as you and I," and their coming needs no defense. But, (still referring to the majority) most of them in their former homes had not been strangers to Christian influence, yet while there had from choice been indifferent to it; and because only a spiritual rebirth could have changed them, it was but natural that upon coming to a region peopled mostly by their own kind, removed from religious influence, the newcomers, instead of breasting the current, drifted with it.

The minority, which was a small one, embraced the two extremes; some of them were almost saintly, while the others should have had their backs broken.

But, with the exception of the last-mentioned class, the people were good citizens, neighborly, generous to a fault and quick to act, even riding miles in any kind of weather over poor roads and rough trails to assist others in times of sickness and misfortune.

Most of them had been in the basin a long time, the influx of new people being but a thin trickle; modes of transportation being such as they were, the great tide of westward migration, deflected and divided by the Big Horn Mountains, went around them and continued onward. Christians especially did that, for churches and good schools usually loom large in their perspective.

There had been a time when the entire area of the basin had been given over to grazing; Henry C. Lovell ran 50,000 cattle in the central part, Otto Franc, for whom the town of Otto was named, ran 20,000 in the upper Greybull Valley, and there were a number of other large outfits. In 1883<sup>1</sup>

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1. B. F. Wickwire in letter to A. W. Coons, Oct. 9, 1941.

there were 150,000 cattle in the basin. At a roundup that spring on No Water Creek, in the southeastern part of the basin, there were wagons from Platte River, Sweetwater River, Powder River, Tongue River, Wind River and Lander; also, that spring, there were other roundups in the basin. Besides, there were several sheepmen with large holdings, including C. H. (Dad) Worland. But the memorable hard winter of 1886-87 had cleaned out most of the large cattlemen and sheepmen. Also, people had come in and settled along the creeks and the Greybull River, with a very few along the Big Horn River. They had built up small herds, and this had given rise to the bloody war of 1892, between the cattlemen and the homesteaders, which was fought in Johnson County but had repercussions in the basin.

To some of the people the county seat meant Lander, to others it meant Buffalo, to still others, Sheridan; it depended on where they resided in the basin.

Roads were few and poor; there were no bridges on the principal streams, but several ferries, which were operated during periods of high water, but at other times the streams were forded. The people transported themselves in wagons, buggies and buckboards and horseback. Billings and Red Lodge were railroad and supply points, although the cattlemen in the eastern part of the basin trailed their cattle out over the mountains in the fall to Parkman for shipment. There were no telephones; mail service was infrequent and irregular, one or more weeks sometimes elapsing between deliveries. There was no church, minister or doctor; J. L. (Uncle Joe) Denney, Basin's first town marshal, often told of taking his wife in a buckboard from Shell Creek to Rawlins when she had an ulcerated tooth; it was extracted by Dr. John E. Osborne, who afterward became Governor. In an area equal to that of Connecticut and New Jersey combined there was but one newspaper, **The Big Horn County Rustler**, owned by Governor William A. Richards and associates and printed by Thomas F. Daggett, formerly Assistant City Editor of the **New York Sun**; it was published at Bonanza. There were two other villages, Hyattville and Otto, although there were a number of country postoffices and several country stores.

The chief diversions of the men were poker, seven-up and other card games, also pitching horseshoes and broncho busting. Drinking was common and gambling was rampant. Sabbath breaking and profanity were common to both sexes. When someone gave a dance, word somehow got around beforehand quickly, although when someone

brought home a jug of whiskey from Billings word got around quicker. People thought nothing of going fifty miles to attend a dance, and dances sometimes lasted two or three days. They were held in private homes, there being no other place to hold them. Usually perfect decorum prevailed; nothing else was tolerated. All met on a common footing; there were no class distinctions.

Such, then, was their mode of life, and few found fault with it. But all unbeknown to them the basin had a date with destiny; and fate, standing at the loom, plying the shuttle, was weaving for them another and better pattern.

### THE ADVANCE GUARD

It is not here fatuously claimed that the advent of Christian ministers in the Big Horn Basin was responsible for the remarkable transformation that came to it. Nevertheless, until the ministers came, development, progress and enlightenment were there conspicuous by reason of their absence. If that fact and the numerous parallel examples all over the land represent nothing more than the working of coincidence, there is much coincidence to account for.

The Methodist field in Wyoming was at first under the jurisdiction of the Colorado Conference, and was known as The Wyoming Mission. It was separated from the conference in 1888, and in 1914 The Wyoming State Conference was organized.

In 1893 Dr. N. A. Chamberlain, Presiding Elder, (whose official designation would now be District Superintendent) appointed Rev. Lewis C. Thompson to open a virgin field, the Big Horn Basin. It seems quite probable that Dr. Chamberlain first sought Divine guidance. In any event he could not have chosen a better man for the work.

On Dec. 15 that year Rev. Thompson hitched a team to a buckboard in Alliance, Nebraska, and set out via the Platte Valley for Otto, Wyoming. He arrived in the basin on New Years Day, 1894.

He soon organized a church with 21 members, most of whom resided at great distances from Otto. He and others hauled dimension lumber from a saw mill on upper Paint Rock, and the finish lumber and the hardware from Billings, and practically with his own hands he erected a frame church building in Otto, valued at \$1200.00.

Dr. Chamberlain, in his annual report to the Conference, stated that Rev. Thompson had traveled 4,000 miles with his buckboard in the snow and the wind, and besides maintaining three preaching schedules forty-five miles apart

had opened two more; he had received less than twenty-five dollars from the people of the basin, nevertheless was anxious to continue there; he got his wish.

Rev. Thompson was a capable minister; he was not the flashy type, but he would have been a credit to any pulpit, city or country. He was a large man physically, and possessed the strength needed to perform the labors and the stamina both physical and moral needed to endure the hardships of a pioneer minister's life. He was resourceful, had great breadth of mind, was tactful without compromising principles and was always unruffled. Because of his great faith he was always optimistic and pleasant.

Besides the church at Otto, Rev. Thompson organized several others and erected buildings, including the one at Thermopolis. He would have organized a church at Basin City quite early, but his hands were full at the time, and another denomination saw the opportunity and grasped it. Some years later he was pastor at Casper. In 1908 he was appointed Superintendent of the Big Horn Basin District and at the same time pastor at Worland. He lived in a tent there the first three months and later built a parsonage. Nearly all the early day ministers in the basin came and went. Rev. Thompson came to remain, and did so until his death, more than thirty years afterward.

The life of an early minister in the basin, while it was not without its rich compensations, was a hard one. There is a story about a pig, perhaps a Communist pig, that preached to the other animals on the farm that all animals are equal, and so stirred up a revolt and the animals took charge of the farm, with the pig as manager. Later, when they found that he was getting most of the food, they complained and reminded him that all animals are equal. He replied "Yes, but some are equaller than others." The life of the average minister anywhere was hard, but that of the early minister in the basin was harder.

The home of such a minister was where he laid his head or where he hung his hat. He did not have all the comforts of home or the privacy needed for study and preparation of discourses. Sometimes he would travel all day without meeting anyone, not always knowing, if it was his first trip that way, where he would put up for the night, but confident that somewhere he would be taken in and made welcome. He might have to sleep on the floor or in the barn, or with the children, which latter sometimes had its disadvantages. Most of the houses, being small, were crowded without him; all but a few were built of logs, and topped by dirt roofs from which tin flues projected. The ceilings and interior

walls of the dwellings were lined with cloth. When the cloth was kalsomined or painted, which was usually the case, it became an excellent sound amplifier when the kerosene lights below were extinguished at night and the mice and pack rats ventured out to play or fight fierce battles punctuated by their squeals and the thumping of their heads against wood. Also at that time, from out the innumerable cracks in the logs behind the cloth lining, there issued a ravenous horde of repulsive creatures advancing stealthily and swiftly upon their sleeping victims, to make their dreams troubled and their sleep unrefreshing. They or their progenitors came down from the mountains hidden in logs. They were as difficult to eradicate as wild morning glory in a field or garden, hence this is not meant as a reflection on pioneer housewives; well, not many. People who a few years later built good homes dared not relax their vigilance, as there were always people in the community who were suspected of being "common carriers." More than once after some house was destroyed by fire, Josh Ellis was heard to remark "There must have been many lives lost." Thanks to the advance of science, and evolution in local building construction, this writer has not heard those pests mentioned for many years.

Sometimes from choice the minister at night would spread his bed outdoors on the ground, even in winter if there was little or no snow. In summer that was not always pleasant, because of mosquitoes.

By act of the Wyoming Legislature early in 1890, Big Horn County was created out of those portions of Sheridan, Johnson and Fremont counties lying within the Big Horn Basin, except a small area south of Owl Creek and west of the Big Horn River; thus, when the town of Thermopolis was moved to its present site in 1896, it was in Fremont County, while the hot springs, bath houses and some of the hotels were in Big Horn County.

The now vanished town of Bonanza, in the lower No Wood Valley, was at that time the center of oil prospecting activity in the basin if not in the state; drilling had been done there years before the discovery of the Salt Creek Field, near Casper. Bonanza had a general store, hotel, drug store, saloon, harness shop, newspaper and a lawyer. The creation of Big Horn County was the beginning of the end for Bonanza.

Winfield S. Collins, a lawyer and civil engineer, was then residing at Bonanza. Years before he and his wife had come from Ohio and settled at Fort Fetterman; later he had helped found the town of Douglas. Still later, he had been

informed that near Bonanza was a place where crude oil seeped out of the ground and that settlers in the vicinity used it to lubricate their wagons and buggies and to some extent for medicinal purposes. He moved to Bonanza, where he practiced law, surveyed canals and ditches and promoted oil exploration and drilling.

When the new county was formed Mr. Collins planned to locate in the county seat, which he presumed would be Otto, on account of its central location. Most of the lots in Otto townsite were unsold, and Mr. Collins drove there hoping to buy them from the owner, Frank S. Wood. The two men dickered and haggled all day but could reach no agreement; at one time only ten dollars stood between them and a deal; finally Mr. Collins drove away, declaring he would found a town on the bank of the Big Horn River.

He soon platted a townsite, which, as he said, straddled the big gulch; the name he chose was Basin City. He made application under government townsite laws then applicable, sent the papers and the fee to the land office at Buffalo, well knowing they would be forwarded to Washington and a long wait was ahead.

That spring John M. Tillard, a Civil War veteran, moved with his family in a covered wagon from Keith County, Nebraska, and he having used his homestead right, one of his daughters, Daisy, filed on land bordering on the river, opposite the proposed townsite. Mr. Tillard built a log house. He also built a ferry and began operating it. (Later on he with John Larson, Charley Anderson, William Lewis and others down the river, constructed the Tillard Canal, on the east side of the river.)

William F. Johnson, a blacksmith, came then with his wife, daughter and three boys from Holt County, Nebraska, and located in the lower Stinking Water (now Shoshone) Valley near the present site of Lovell.

Also, Lewis A. Barrett, his wife and five children and William Mardis, came from Thomas County, Kansas, and settled in the Gould district in the lower Greybull Valley.

C. W. Mason, his wife, son and daughter were then residing a few miles up the river. The daughter, Nina, was afterward a school teacher and married Barnett G. Rogers.

Basin Methodists have good reason to remember the names Johnson, Barrett and Mason.

Tall, dark young Dr. R. W. Hale, the Big Horn Basin's first physician, located that summer at Otto.

The Johnson family came the following spring (1896) from the Stinking Water Valley and located on land border-

ing on the river and adjoining the proposed townsite on the north; they lived at first in a tent.

Mr. Collins then received notice that his townsite application had been approved. He at once rounded up a crew and surveyed and staked out lots; Mrs. Johnson cooked for the party. Mr. Collins announced that a picnic would be held on the townsite July Fourth.

Picnics were none too common; people came from far and near. A number bought lots; the price was ten dollars for a thirty-foot lot and twenty dollars for a sixty-foot lot.

The town of Cody was founded that year, also the town of Thermopolis was moved.

All the early business buildings and dwellings in Basin City were constructed of logs, and there were a few dug-outs. The first building was occupied by **The Basin City Herald**,\* published by Joseph A. Magill and O. T. (Tom) Gebhart. Zane and Richardson, then running a store on upper Shell Creek, opened a store in Basin City; they sold the Shell store to C. F. Mackenzie, who died in Greybull about a year ago. Josiah Cook moved his store from the lower Stinking Water Valley, James I. Patten moved his drug store from Bonanza and Otto Maier came from Bonanza with his harness shop. Mr. Collins came and opened a law office. The town soon had three saloons, one of them opened by Al Pease. During the late 1880's and early 1890's Bald Mountain City, on Bald Mountain, was a flourishing gold mining camp with a population this writer has never heard estimated at less than 5,000. Al Pease ran a saloon there. In his saloon in Basin he had one of the finest collections of elk, deer, antelope and mountain sheep heads in the west.

C. Dana Carter, who had then graduated from a medical school in St. Louis at the age of 21, came with his bride and located in the new town. He made quick decisions, did not spare the scalpel, and his fame spread. He kept a corral full of fast broncs, none of which when hitched to a buggy needed to be told to pick them up and put them down. He thought nothing of driving fifty or one-hundred miles, day or night, in any kind of weather, sometimes going as far as Lost Cabin. He performed many emergency operations on dining room or kitchen tables. His son, Lester W. Carter, is a prominent hotel man in Billings.

George N. Mecklem and Abraham L. Snyder filed on homesteads adjoining the townsite on the south.

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\*A copy of Vol. 1, No. 1, Aug. 26, 1896, is located in the Walter Curtis Collection, University of Wyo. Archives Department.—Ed.



Travel between Basin City and Billings was by way of Ribbon Canyon, so named because it was narrow and very winding, with many quick turns, although the floor was hard and smooth and mostly level. It is between Basin and Lovell, although not on Highway No. 20. The larger freight outfits drove four or six horses, pulling two wagons. They uncoupled at the canyon and took one wagon through, then went back for the other.

It is surprising how many luxuries, conveniences and refinements one can dispense with and be none the worse for it. There were neither trees nor grass in the town; nor walks. It stood on a wind-swept flat, the only vegetation being sagebrush, salt sage and cactus, the landscape dotted with innumerable ant hills and the habitations of prairie dogs. Heavy dust storms were frequent, and the dust sifted under doors, through keyholes and around windows, also through cracks between the logs where the plastering had fallen off.

Water was carried from the river in pails or hauled in barrels; just as every Basin home now has its garbage or fire barrel, each then had its water barrel; Josh Ellis for some time was water boy. Sometimes in winter when one went to the river for water he took an axe to cut a hole through the ice. During high water, in the spring and summer months, the water resembled in appearance nothing more than thick, red soup, and when brought from the river was not used until it had stood awhile and the sediment had settled. Ranchers brought fresh meat to town during cold weather; at other times it was not to be had.

In 1912, this writer, making a trip from Lander to Powell, arrived by stage in Thermopolis late in the afternoon and was obliged to wait until noon the next day for the north-bound train. On the street he met Dr. Carter, who had moved there two years before. Fortune was smiling on both. They went inside and during the conversation which followed the doctor said earnestly, "Could we but have known it, the years we spent in those log houses in that town down the river were the happiest of all." The response to his remark was "Doc, I think you said something."

In the fall of 1896 Basin City, Otto and Cody were candidates for county seat honors. Tom Daggett moved **The Big Horn County Rustler** from Bonanza to Otto, where Lou Blakesley was already publishing **The Otto Courier**, and the ensuing war between the Otto papers and the Basin City paper was, to say the least, acrimonious. Some of Basin City's supporters went to Cody and convinced the people

there that Cody stood no chance and asked them to support Basin City, promising that in the event the people in the west half should later wish to divide the county they would meet no opposition from Basin City. As a result Cody's supporters threw their weight to Basin City and that town won. Otto's adherents then instituted a contest. Tom Daggett at that time moved **The Rustler** to Basin City.

William L. Smith, of upper Shell Creek, erected a two-story log building in Basin City, the first floor to be occupied by the county officers, the upper floor to be used for holding court, dances, religious and political meetings and other public gatherings.

There were two livery stables; one, the Riverside Barn, situated by the river, owned by Dan H. Rinehart, and the Jo John Barn, owned by John A. Anderson. (His nickname was Jo John, with the accent on the Jo.) Mrs. Gertrude Hunter (afterwards Pennell and still later Quiner) opened a small hotel; Mrs. Sallie Gebhart soon opened another.

Basin City was then receiving and forwarding its mail through the Otto postoffice, via Meeteetse, Cody and Red Lodge, usually twice a week, depending on the condition of some of the creeks.

Miss Emma Tillard, daughter of the ferryman, opened a subscription school. (She afterwards married Walter B. Curtis.) When a school district came into being, a low-walled, dirt-roofed, one-room log schoolhouse was erected in the northwest part of town.

When a local postoffice was finally established, the Post-office Department gave it the name of Basin; now the former name lives only in the memory of the few remaining old timers. Charles F. Judkins, a son of a rancher on the lower Greybull, was the first Basin postmaster. He was single, and being a cripple, always walked with the aid of a cane. He was an atheist, also a hard drinker. He did not long remain postmaster. About forty years ago he moved to California. A few months ago, in reply to a question by this writer, Oscar Robertson, of Basin, said that Charley Judkins was still living, also that he was quite religious and somewhat noisy about it.

Otto lost its contest. Justice Willis M. Vandevanter ruled that Basin had won fairly and squarely, and he predicted a bright future for it. He little dreamed of the bright future that was to be his; he was afterwards an able and revered Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

On December 18, 1897, Rev. John L. Limes, who had been the first pastor of the Baptist Church in Sheridan but had later become a rancher on the lower Greybull, organ-

ized the First Baptist Church of Basin. Several of the members resided on the Greybull between Basin and Otto; one was on upper Shell Creek; one was at Hyattville, two on the North Fork of the Stinking Water, above Cody; the sons and daughters of the Tillard family, across the river, were nearest. The meetings were held in the Smith building.

In the spring of 1898 Frank T. Brigham left Edgemont, South Dakota, and not long afterwards came by way of Hyattville into Basin, on a bicycle. He was a building contractor, but as no building was then in prospect he opened Basin's first restaurant.

During the summer the Northern Pacific Railroad began grading roadbed for extension of its Rock Creek Branch, the extension to run from Silesia to a terminus to be known as Bridger, thus bringing the railroad within 105 miles of Basin.

In August David L. Darr, of McCook, Nebraska, came by train to Sheridan, and from there he drove over the mountains to Basin. In a few days he organized the Big Horn County Bank, the first in the county; then he returned home to pack up. He and his wife shipped their household goods and a saddle horse in a chartered freight car to Sheridan. Being unable there to make satisfactory arrangement for having the stuff brought over the mountains, Mr. Darr procured a wagon and another horse, loaded a cook stove, bedding, dishes and clothing into the wagon, and after rebilling the car to Billings, he and his wife started on the drive to Basin. In Buffalo they met a boy, Josh Ellis, who said that he, his older brother and their parents were on their way from Des Moines, Iowa, to Basin.

On arriving in Basin Mr. Darr dispatched a freighter to Billings for his goods, and Mrs. Darr began counting the days. Thanksgiving came, then December, with the bank opening for business, then Christmas and New Year, with no news of the freighter.

The winter was mild until noon of January 24; then a raging blizzard roared in from the northwest, bringing snow, which, with subsequent ones was three feet on a level. Bitter cold came, and it persisted, the thermometer at one time indicating fifty-two degrees below. How much colder it may have been no one knew, as that was as far as the thermometer would register. Freighters could not come in or go out. Supplies in the stores dwindled; coal and kerosene became scarce. When spring came one of the stores had no food on hand except some dry beans. Then

the stockmen took inventory and many of them discovered that they had been put out of business.

Life in the village during the winter had not been without its incidents. The Smith building was destroyed by fire, as was the White Elephant, a dance pavilion on the public square. Tom Cannon, a saloon man, sat in a game one night and lost his saloon, his bicycle, his watch and his gun; but he boasted that they hadn't taken away his woman friend. George H. McCray, a rancher on the No Wood, while intoxicated one night, became abusive in Al Pease's saloon and Pease struck him with a chair, inflicting injuries from which he later died.

In the spring Mr. Darr's freighter came in with his wagons. He had loaded up at Billings, but when he had arrived at Pryor Gap on the way back, graders on the railroad extension had many horses at work and the horses were eating much hay; the freighter was offered a job baling hay on a nearby ranch and went to work, after first dumping Mr. Darr's stuff by the roadside. When the blizzard came the freighter couldn't continue working, but neither could he get to Basin or anywhere else. The goods by the roadside were buried in the snow until spring, then he brought them all in except a barrel of silverware which was never found. Josh Ellis has stated that very little of his family's goods ever reached Basin.

The Big Horn County Bank once ordered one thousand silver dollars from Omaha, and Henry (Dad) Payne, the leading freighter, was told to get them out of the express office and bring them to Basin. On the way back, when he got to Pryor Gap he had a breakdown. He put the silver in a keg and marked the keg "Horse shoes"; then he went horseback for repairs. When he returned to the wagons the silver was there.

The County Commissioners hastily erected a small one-room board building and the county officers moved in.

The Baptist people that spring began erecting a small frame church building which is still standing and is the only building they have ever owned, although they now meet in a basement which has recently been constructed under the building. Frank Brigham was the contractor on the church building and received fifty dollars for his work, although he donated part of it. Those people through the years have consistently stayed out of debt; and this writer makes no mistake about it, they have prospered spiritually.

The next year, 1900, the B. & M. Rail Road, as it was known locally, (Burlington and Missouri River Rail Road in

Nebraska) began work on a branch line from Toluca to Cody. Toluca was on the main line, east of Billings.

Also that year the Basin Brick Company was formed and work was begun, the object being to supply brick for a new county building. The Commissioners let a contract for the building and work was begun in the summer. Also that year the Basin Water Company was formed, mains were dug and work of laying pipe was begun.

During most of that year many long caravans of covered wagons passed through Basin, going north. In the wagons or with them were people on whose faces faith, courage and determination were written large. It was an epic migration. The people came from Idaho and Utah. The writer has acquired a great respect for them, for there is about them much that others would do well to emulate. Many of them found work on the new railroad extension, living meanwhile in tents.

Josiah Cook was running a stage and mail route between Bridger and Basin; stages went three times a week.

Court was held in the Baptist Church; the Modern Woodman also held lodge meetings there; as for dancing, Basin-ites were out of luck.

In the spring of 1901 the new county building was completed; there were three offices and the jail, all under one roof.

Water was turned into the mains that spring. A small stone building by the river housed a small gasoline engine which pumped water to a tiny red wooden tank on the nearest hill west of town. Frank Brigham rode down twice a day on his bicycle and did the pumping.

That spring the Wyoming Legislature changed the name of the Stinking Water River to Shoshone. Also, Congress donated to the town of Basin all unsold lots in the townsite; it meant that Basin must in time incorporate.

The railroad was completed into Cody that summer, also the town of Garland sprang into existence with what appeared to be bright prospects; it became Basin's shipping point. Josiah Cook discontinued his stage and mail route to Bridger, and O. C. Morgan carried mail and passengers between Basin and Garland; stages came and went three times a week, usually.

Early in September Mrs. Agnes L. Hoover, postmistress at Otto, came into the bank in Basin and drew out some money and then went on to Thermopolis. Her husband, John W. Hoover, had died late in December. He had been postmaster, owned a general store in Otto and a ranch on Shell Creek. Mrs. Hoover stated that she was going to

Thermopolis for the baths, and no doubt that was true, but it seems as likely that she was trying to avoid a troublesome suitor, Joseph P. Walters. He was an elderly man who was traveling over the basin taking orders for men's made-to-measure clothing. At one time he had been a county attorney in Nebraska. He followed her to Thermopolis, met her in the State Park, on the east side of the river, and when she refused to marry him he shot her dead. The crime was committed in Big Horn County.

Rev. Ernest T. Everett, the Methodist minister then stationed in Otto, had come to Basin occasionally and preached. He was the rough and ready type and could easily adapt himself to any kind of circumstances; he was well educated, and very bright. He was an able minister, also sang and played the organ well. Rev. E. P. Hughes at this time succeeded him in Otto, and Rev. Everett, who was an old newspaperman, came to Basin and helped on **The Big Horn County Rustler**.

Two years before, Rev. August C. Wunderlich, of Hemingford, Nebraska, brought a large colony of Lutherans from that state and they settled on land under the Wiley Ditch, promoted by Solon L. Wiley, of Omaha. The land is on what was then known as the Germania Bench, but now the Emblem Bench. Rev. Wunderlich organized a church and was its first pastor.

Also about two years before, L. L. Moffett, of Red Lodge, built a telephone line from Red Lodge to Basin, via Cody and Meeteetse. There was no exchange in Basin; the only phone was for long distance calling and was in the Z. & R. Store.

In the fall of 1901, W. S. Collins rounded up a crew of volunteers and they went up the river and began preliminary surveys for the Big Horn Canal. They were gone several weeks.

Came then 1902. On the cold cheerless morning of February 7, a young tenderfoot lawyer ambled into the county building and proudly informed County Clerk Willis J. Booth and Deputies Frank I. Rue and Leslie Davidson that he was having a birth anniversary. Something in the eyes of the three officials suggested to the young man that he had talked out of turn, and he moved toward an exit, but found it guarded. One of the men went out and brought in a barrel and laid the young man over it; Willis Booth produced a pair of cowboy's chaps, and he was well skilled in the use of them on such occasions.

Rev. E. P. Hughes, of Otto, had gone to Cody in January and organized a church and the people were now preparing to erect a building.

W. S. Collins was then in the east, interesting capital in construction of the Big Horn Canal. In March a stranger came into the bank in Basin and handed this writer a card bearing the name of C. F. Robertson. The stranger said he was going up the river to look around. He did that, and was so impressed that he promoted the Hanover Canal, up the river, on the east side.

Early that spring people on Broken Back Creek in the Ten Sleep country sent word that Tom Gorman, a young rancher, his wife, Maggie, their infant daughter and Tom's brother, Jim, had disappeared under suspicious circumstances. Sheriff D. N. Hale, Coroner C. Dana Carter and Acting County Attorney C. A. Zaring went up and found the partly burned body of Tom Gorman in a shallow grave. The sheriff and his deputies got on the trail. One of them, Tobias J. Borner, a nephew of Calamity Jane, overtook Jim and Maggie Gorman and the child near Red Lodge, brought them to Basin and Jim Gorman was jailed.

Late in the spring Josiah Cook completed a two-story stone store building; the upper floor was used for dances and public gatherings, including court. J. P. Walters, who had killed Agnes L. Hoover, was found guilty of murder in the first degree and sentenced to hang. His counsel appealed.

Early in July the new Methodist Church building in Cody was dedicated free of debt; it was the Cody way.

Late that month the people of Basin voted to incorporate the town; a month later, W. S. Collins very appropriately became the town's first Mayor. C. Dana Carter, M. B. Rhodes, Frank I. Rue and William Staley were elected Councilmen.

For several years all efforts to build a public hall had failed. Such a move required the united efforts of all the people, and meetings had been held, but each one had ended in a squabble. In August, 1902, this writer evolved a plan, the success of which required secrecy at first. In a few hours the project gained such headway that no one wanted to stay out of it. Work began at once on two lots on Fourth Street donated by Willis J. Booth, and that street was then destined to become the principal business street of the town.

At the October term of court Jim Gorman was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to two years in the penitentiary. The next morning while Lawyer C. A. Zaring was at breakfast, Judge J. L. Stotts came in and said "Enterline

(Gorman's lawyer) is going to ask for a retrial. I will grant it, and the next time we will . . . "

Fraternity Hall was completed early in November. Battery "B," Wyoming National Guard, was mustered in then with C. C. Blake, Captain, Ira L. Van Camp, First Lieutenant, and George W. Black, Second Lieutenant. The first floor of Fraternity Hall was used as an armory, for holding court, dances, funerals and other public gatherings, including political meetings. Freemasons in Basin and surrounding territory had met informally in the Baptist Church in the spring and taken steps toward forming a lodge. In December they met for the first time as a lodge, in Fraternity Hall, and were at once swamped with work of conferring degrees; the following November the lodge was instituted under a charter.

When 1903 came, Basin had about 120 inhabitants, one church, four saloons, three general stores, two drug stores, one bank, one newspaper, one doctor and four lawyers. There were a few walks and crossings, all wooden. Four of the dwellings were of frame and one was of stone.

In January a lodge of I.O.O.F. was instituted.

Mr. Collins was again in the east, and this writer was Acting Mayor.

At a meeting of the Town Council early that year, Rev. E. P. Hughes, of Otto, appeared and informed the Council that if the town would donate two lots he would buy two and build a Methodist church and parsonage. This was pleasing news. But when the writer asked Rev. Hughes which lots he wanted, he specified the lots on which the parsonage is now situated. The writer said, "Oh no! Not if I can help it!"

The writer, then living in a log house by the river, was preparing to build a dwelling across the street from those lots. When a boy he had lived across the street from a Methodist Church, and he wanted no more of that. Whenever anyone got sick or fainted or was stung by a yellow jacket, that person was brought across the street and one or more of the writer's family had to leave services and go along. The church often lacked a table cloth, water pitcher or glass. Always, after Sunday School some of the children were sure to want a drink, which they usually needed as much as a dog needs two tails; but when one of them wanted a drink, he or she wanted a drink, especially if it would involve the novelty of getting it away from home; they seldom came singly, which meant that someone across the street would be late for church. Often when the bell rang, some dogs in the neighborhood howled mournfully.



The writer offered Rev. Hughes other lots and he accepted them. Sanford S. Halstead then owned two lots in the block which had been Rev. Hughes' preference. Rev. Hughes exchanged lots with him; then L. A. Barrett came in from the Greybull and bought two adjoining lots and presented them to Rev. Hughes, who thus got what he had been wanting.

Rev. Hughes at once hauled poles from the mountains, also procured some rough boards and built a shelter for his team on the back part of the lots. Next he constructed a dugout on the back part of the lots and moved his family from Otto, although he continued as pastor there. He and his wife had a small daughter; a married daughter lived at Otto.

Rev. Hughes was tall and rugged, and he could "take it." He sang well and had a powerful voice.

He began getting material on the ground for a parsonage, which, together with the church, would cost, on an estimate, \$2,700.00 to \$3,000.00; building was much less expensive then than now. He got the dimension stuff and sheathing from sawmills in the mountains; the finish stuff was hauled in from the railroad. He did most of the hauling. It was fifty miles to Garland and almost as far to the sawmills. He did most of the work on the building.

Hilliard S. Ridgely located in Cody that spring. He was a young lawyer from Col. W. F. Cody's old home town, North Platte, Nebraska, where he had been County Attorney of Lincoln County. At the spring term of court, Ridgely and C. A. Zaring assisted County Attorney John P. Arnott in prosecuting Jim Gorman for the murder of his brother. Gorman was convicted of murder in the first degree and sentenced to hang.

Early that year the Bell system acquired the Moffett line and began building extensions in the basin. J. B. King was at first in charge, later succeeded by J. E. Frisby. A small exchange was installed in Basin.

One evening in June Jim Gorman was permitted exercise outside the jail and he escaped; two days later he asked for breakfast at the home of C. C. Smith on upper Shell Creek; Smith had been on the jury which had convicted him; he returned him to the jail. People in the east part of the county began chafing at the law's delay.

Jim McCloud, a bad man known as "Driftwood Jim," had stolen a horse on the upper Greybull; he was also suspected of having robbed the postoffice at Buffalo. In the middle of July he was caught by Edmo LeClaire, of the Lander country, who took him to Thermopolis and Sheriff J. J.

Fenton and Fred Garland went up to get him. Then at night, Fenton and the prisoner started on foot for the bridge where Garland was to meet them with the wagon; but Fenton and the prisoner found the bridge bristling with guns and lost no time in returning to town.

For two weeks this writer had gone each evening to the county building and helped Assessor C. B. Kershner. C. Earl Price, a model young man, widely known and popular, was Deputy County Clerk. He slept at night in the Clerk's office on a cot which he rolled under the counter during the day. He came in early each evening and sat in the dark with his head on his desk. His fiancée, Maude Hoover, had died a month before.

On the night of July 18, 1903, Chief Justice C. N. Potter, of the Wyoming Supreme Court, who was then Grand Master of Wyoming Masons, paid a visit to the local lodge. This writer did not go to the county building that evening; he went to lodge, and at midnight to bed.

Shortly afterward a party of armed men from Shell Creek, Paint Rock and the No Wood, ferried themselves across the river quietly, and with military precision formed ranks and marched to the county building. They beat upon the east door; Jailer George S. Mead fired through the door, over their heads, and a hail of shots came quickly from the other side; Earl Price, in the act of getting off his cot, fell dead.

The mob broke down the door and entered the jail. They failed to open the cell door, and J. P. Walters, holding up a lighted candle, told them to shoot him, which they did, after first shooting Jim Gorman.

As the mob prepared to leave, their captain's voice betrayed him when he gave commands. Impulsive young Dr. C. L. Gillam wanted to open fire on them with a rifle but was dissuaded by cooler heads. As the mob almost reached the river again, Town Marshal G. E. (Bert) Brigham emptied a .32 cal. revolver at them from behind a pile of baled hay, without inflicting any damage.

Jim Gorman did not die instantly but was taken to Dr. Carter's office; when asked if he had any statement to make, he replied "I never peached on anyone in my life and I'll not do it now." Maggie Gorman was then working in the hotel in what there then was of Worland, on the west side of the river. When told Jim had been killed she asked "Did he tell anything?"

Two years before, A. G. Rupp had come from Illinois and opened a store up the river at a postoffice which he named Welling. The telephone line north from Thermopolis had

reached Welling, and former Sheriff D. N. Hale rode up there to phone Earl Price's people on Owl Creek. When he had done so the operator at Thermopolis put Sheriff Fenton on the line. After conversing with him Mr. Hale returned to Basin, and Captain Blake, after making phone calls to Cheyenne, ordered out Battery "B" and they began rounding up horses to go as cavalry. They left at 4:00 p.m. in one of the worst dust storms ever seen in this region and escorted the sheriff's party to Basin without incident.

The grand jury indicted a number of mob suspects and one of them was put on trial, but as the witnesses were afflicted with very poor memories, all the cases were dismissed.

That summer many Basin people saw a moving picture for the first time. It was the Great Northern Train Robbery, here one night only.

After living in the dugout eight months Rev. Hughes moved into the parsonage although only the lower floor had been plastered. He had entertained the District Superintendent and others in the dugout, besides keeping his regular appointments at Otto.

Very few members of the Baptist Church lived in or near Basin. A number of new people had elsewhere been church members; also there were some who had backslidden, and some who had never been Christians. Rev. John M. Jones, Mission Superintendent, planned to hold a revival, then reorganize the church.

Mention of backsliders recalls an incident in Lander forty years ago. Preparation was being made for holding meetings in the armory, in which there were no seats. The manager of a lumber yard told a young employee to load some plank onto a wagon and deliver them at the armory. When he went out a few minutes later he found that the young man had chosen planks that were knotty, resinous and full of splinters and he explained that they would discourage backsliding.

Rev. James B. McKeehan, a college president from Kentucky, came and preached for three weeks, with power and unction. In the language of Mark Twain when he wrote about St. Patrick and the snakes, "He exalted his staff and let them have it." An atmosphere of seriousness settled down over the meetings; quite a number found God for salvation, some backsliders were reclaimed and the glory of the Lord was there.

One night during the meetings a young man convert gave clear, ringing testimony. The following night he was there, but sat with his girl friend in the farthest row back, and

remained silent while testimony was being given. Rev. McKeehan called to him and asked "How do you feel tonight?" The young man stretched his arms and legs, yawned and replied "Oh, I feel fair to middling." Rev. McKeehan then asked "Do you feel as good as you did last night?" The reply was "Well, I don't feel any worse."

In those days ministers who transferred to Wyoming, with its poor pay, hard work and deprivations, usually did so for one of two reasons: either they were earnestly striving to do the will of God, or they had become too well known elsewhere and for them it was any old port in a storm. At the close of the last century Dr. E. E. Tarbill,<sup>2</sup> Presiding Elder, complained bitterly of some "misfits" who had been well recommended and foisted onto weak Wyoming churches. This writer had a vivid recollection of a case a few years later in which good Dr. Tarbill was shamefully imposed upon. The writer's experience with ministers dates from the time he was able to walk and he can usually size one up quickly and "get his number." He had close acquaintance with Revs. Limes, Jones, Thompson, Everett, and Hughes, all of whom came before 1904, and knows they were all able men, well grounded in Christian doctrine and deeply consecrated. And many who have since come have been like them.

During the revival in the Baptist Church Rev. Hughes gave wholehearted assistance; he and his wife were present every night, singing, praying and counseling seekers and others; for after all, Christ knows no denominations. After the meeting closed, as some of the converts were of Methodist families, he decided, as he told this writer, to "strike while the iron was hot."

### REV. E. P. HUGHES

On Sunday forenoon, November 1, 1903, Rev. E. P. Hughes held services in Fraternity Hall, and at that time organized the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Basin, with ten members, namely, William F. and Lucilla Johnson, Lewis A. and Hannah L. Barrett, C. W. Mason and his wife and their daughter, Mrs. Nina Rogers; also Mrs. Nora Linnabary, Mrs. Susie Black and Mrs. Virginia McMahan. Mrs. Linnabary and Mrs. Black were wives of Basin merchants; Mrs. McMahan was a new arrival from Atwood, Kansas. All but the last three were transferred from the Methodist Church at Otto.

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2. Wyoming Conference Journal, 1950.

On November 8 four boys and two girls were received on probation.

Mrs. McMahan was Superintendent of the Sunday School. Al Pease and his wife lived in an annex to his saloon, and according to reports, the Ladies' Aid Society was organized there.

Work on the church building was begun in the spring, with Rev. Hughes doing most of the hauling and carpenter work; it was a frame structure. A two-room stone schoolhouse was built one block east and two blocks south of the church. The log schoolhouse was left standing, which was fortunate as it was needed the next year. A local corporation erected a two-story frame building in the west part of town to house Big Horn College, with the Baptist pastor, Rev. E. W. Mecum, at the head. The project revealed a combination of noble impulse and poor judgment and was foredoomed to failure.

The town that year voted bonds and took over the waterworks.

The following advertisement appeared weekly in the Basin paper: "If drinking interferes with your business, quit your business, but drink Puritan Rye." At the same time the following appeared weekly in **The Meeteetse News**: "What must I do to be saved? Drink Puritan Rye."

That year, on Copper Mountain, south of Thermopolis, a mining boom started which was to last several years.

That year a tall, raw-boned man, red-faced and rough-featured, with sandy hair, drifted into town. He was roughly garbed, quiet mannered and liked his tobacco. He lived in a tent across the river, and soon drilled with a spring pole and got gas enough to cook his meals. He was Philip Minor, discoverer of the Torchlight Field, so named by him; later he got a big gasser at Greybull. During the years he remained, and when he left, he was as poor in purse as when he came.

Big Horn County Bank that fall contracted for a lot of cord wood, stacked north of town; in the winter they burnt a kiln of brick with which to erect a new building.

Other fields needing an organizer and builder such as Rev. Hughes were calling him and early in 1905 he resigned his charge and moved. The church then had twelve members. This writer has no further information concerning Rev. Hughes, but he is sure that wherever he went he gave to the cause the best that he had; it was not in him to do otherwise.

**REV. CHARLES E. FENTON**

More new people came to Basin in 1905 and 1906 than during any other two-year period in its history; they were two great years for the town and should have been good for its two little weak churches.

Fit ministers were not always available in the middle of a Conference year. Rev. J. D. Cain, at Hyattville, a good man, was assigned this charge, but instead of coming he moved away. On February 12 the above-named individual arrived with his family in Garland, flat broke, and phoned into Basin, saying "Here I am; if you want me, come get me." A few months before, the other church had a like experience. Both church treasuries were bare but some of the brethren paid for hauling them in. It didn't turn out well in either case, though the other church got a man of good morals.

The new Methodist pastor was 37 years old, with a fair education. Much frontier preaching had given him confidence in the pulpit; he lacked none when away from it; he was exuberant and garrulous, the "life of the party" sort, and in time it was found that his ways were devious and had long been. There were four bright children. Amanda, the mother, was a devout woman and loyal to her husband. She was definitely faded, but she had reason to be after having borne children and nursed and cared for them and the husband on a minister's poor pay with the hardships endured for years in the Nebraska sandhills.

Work was progressing on the two big canals, news of the Copper Mountain excitement and Philip Minor's oil exploration had leaked out. The ceded portion of the Shoshone and Arapahoe Indian Reservation in the Lander country was due to be opened the next year. The Northwestern Railroad wanted to enter the basin via Wind River Canyon and the Burlington wanted to extend and go out through it. The Interstate Commerce Commission decided in favor of the Burlington. The result of all this was that the eyes of many restless people, yearning for greener pastures, turned toward the basin and its capital. Bricklayers, stone masons, carpenters, lathers, plasterers, painters and unskilled laborers began coming. Basin got another doctor, six more lawyers, another saloon, a wholesale liquor house, two houses of ill fame and gamblers galore. New dwellings sprang up all over town and a number of business buildings were erected. Basin had come alive and was going to town.

**The Basin Republican** was founded that year by Phillips and Son.

The pastor was intermittently ill during the last half of 1905; members of the church, neighbors and others were sympathetic and kind and were unremitting at his bedside and in ministering to him and his helpless family. Water was piped to the parsonage by subscription. Money was donated in another subscription. A woman skimped and denied herself and bought winter underwear for the entire family. Such acts of kindness usually bring out the best of a man's nature, but apparently not always.

Late that year a bridge across the Big Horn was built south of Basin.

The Big Horn Railroad, a subsidiary of the Burlington, then building south of Frannie, had reached Lovell, but no decision had been reached as to whether to go across country via Otto to Thermopolis or go up the Big Horn River. Later their representatives met with the Basin town fathers, who granted them a right of way through the town, with other concessions. Seven log houses were moved to another part of town at the town's expense. Then the representative of the road's land department wanted the two homesteads adjoining the town on the south, but they had been sold to Sheridan parties who intended making whatever profit was to be made. Fred N. Pearson, spokesman for the road's land department, then declared that they would build a town at the mouth of the Greybull and make Basin a whistling post.

Early the next year the pastor was in good health, though he faked an illness downtown one night.

On March 26 an ice gorge in the Big Horn River carried the new bridge away.

The pastor by that time was better understood and laymen of the church and other citizens convinced him that he should move; but it was again in the middle of the Conference year and he had no place to go; besides he had not the wherewith.

Late in the afternoon of June 21 a construction train came into Basin, its crew laying rails ahead, and it went on to the new town of Worland; that place was the terminus for two years; then for two years it was at Kirby, afterwards for two years at Thermopolis. Greybull and Zada were founded in the fall of 1906; the name of the latter town is now Manderson.

Our church was dedicated July 15, 1906.

The Conference, at Wheatland, in August, moved the pastor to a small coal camp across the mountains, then the following year to Ranchester, a nearby village, but he soon resigned, explaining that he was going to Kansas to

farm for an uncle. Many years later he was pastor at Bridger, Montana, where he remarried, his faithful wife having gone to her reward. He did not visit Basin; five or six years ago he went the way of all flesh.

### REV. JOHN H. GILLESPIE

Mission Superintendent Rev. J. C. Bickell having been made aware of the needs of the church and the wishes of the people of the community, Rev. Gillespie was assigned to this charge. It was an admirable choice. He had been in Wyoming so long that his fitness for the ministry was well known; his ability and zeal and his ripe age (63), and his proven probity begat confidence and were assurance that while holding up a lamp for others he would himself walk in the light. He had served at Thermopolis in 1903-4-5; the latter year he had organized a church in Worland and planned a building. The little flock in Basin took fresh courage, and quickly realizing that Rev. Gillespie was the answer to their prayer, they backed him to a man and to a woman.

In the fall he held evangelistic meetings in the church; he was assisted by Rev. H. A. Toland, Methodist pastor at Hyattville. The result was an increase in church membership, seventy-five per cent.

After the Conference the following year Rev. Gillespie became agent for Nebraska State Hospital and continued thus for many years. He died in 1927, at the age of eighty-three.

### REV. HENRY D. GOUGH

This sketch is short and sad.

Rev. Gough came from Worland in the fall of 1907 with his wife, Letitia, a small red-haired woman, and their small red-haired son, Richard.

Some years before, Rev. Gough had been connected with the Salvation Army. He was zealous and sincere, and his preaching impressive.

Late the following January the first birth occurred in the parsonage, that of a girl. Complications set in and brought about the death of the mother. Sheriff B. F. Wickwire and wife, a childless couple, adopted the baby and Rev. Gough and Richard left town.

There have been other births in the parsonage, but no other deaths.



Sewers were installed in 1907 in Basin, the town having voted bonds. The year before a private corporation (local) had built a light and power plant.

### REV. HOMER E. SHEPHERD

Rev. Shepherd took up the work here April 1, 1908, having but recently been pastor of Grace M. E. Church in St. Joseph, Missouri. He began preaching in that state in 1893 and had filled some important charges. He was a widower, tall and bald. He was able and energetic, employed no flourishes and results soon became apparent.

Farmers along the line of the Big Horn Canal were supplied with water that spring for the first time. A year later Basinites began using water from the canal. Only those who were here in the early days can realize the transformation that took place. The town voted bonds and acquired the local light and power plant in the fall of 1909. Also that fall a group of men whose leaders came from Sistersville, West Virginia, turned natural gas into mains in Basin, which was the first city or town in the northwest to enjoy that convenience. The group later incorporated as the Wyoming Gas Company. That year, due to the untiring efforts of Raymond B. West, a young lawyer, work was begun on the local Carnegie Library. In the spring of 1910 the town fathers caused trees to be planted on all Basin streets, and Basinites in a few years found themselves living in the midst of a forest.

Rev. Shepherd was assigned to the Worland charge in the summer of 1911. On November 30 his successor in Basin, Rev. S. W. Albone, united him in marriage with Miss Mattie Radcliffe, of Basin. Rev. Shepherd served six churches after leaving Basin, besides being Secretary of the Endowment Fund and Conference Statistician. He retired in 1938 after forty-three years in the ministry and until two years ago resided in Cheyenne. His wife died at that time and he went to California; he is 85 years old, if still living.

### REV. S. W. ALBONE

In September, 1911, Rev. Albone and his wife, Adelaide, an elderly couple, came to Basin from the Colorado Conference. He had been in the ministry since 1889 and had filled charges in California and Nevada.

The following summer Mrs. Albone's brother came from England to visit them and was surprised to find tomatoes ripening out of doors, something they don't do in England.

The first night, when he retired he put his shoes outside the door of his room; he had another surprise next morning when he found the shoes hadn't been shined.

That year a house diagonally across the street and a few doors down, caught fire, and when the fire company arrived a nine year old son of the family stood at the gate with an accordion in his hands, playing "Home, Sweet Home." The same boy had a pet magpie; one day a carpenter was roofing a building in the north part of town and thought someone has spoken to him; he turned and a bird sitting on the roof said "Hello!"; he got down and went home, concluding he had taken one too many.

At the Conference in Newcastle that fall Rev. Albone reported church membership at 69 and Sunday School enrollment at 150; he was then assigned to Upton. The few remaining old timers in Basin remember the Albones as very fine people.

### REV. W. E. CALDWELL

Among a collection of old phonograph records in this writer's home is one the title of which is "He Walked Right in and Turned Around and Walked Right Out Again."

When the writer stopped in Basin in July, 1914, on the way to Oregon, Rev. Albone was still here; when he returned the following March, Rev. Morton Creath was pastor. Two years ago the writer while looking through an old Conference journal found mention of Rev. W. E. Caldwell's ministry in Basin in 1914 and began making inquiry; no one knew anything about Rev. Caldwell except one good sister who said she remembered the name. Inquiry through correspondence revealed that Rev. Caldwell came to Wyoming in 1907 from the Northwest Kansas Conference, and served at Dietz, Upton and Newcastle before coming to Basin in 1914, and that he then went to the Northwest Nebraska Conference. The membership roll reveals that he came in September and left late in October. The cause of his leaving is as much a mystery to us as two questions that have intrigued people the past eighty years, namely, "What became of Charlie Ross?" and "Who struck Billy Patterson?"

### REV. ULYSSES M. CREATH

Rev. Morton Creath, as he was known, came to Basin with his wife, Lula May, in December, 1914. They were middle-aged and childless, and very sociable people. Rev. Creath planted a garden the following spring. He also

began raising chickens, but his ardor was chilled one night when coyotes broke in and killed half of them.

At Conference, in Laramie, in August, Rev. Creath reported the church membership at 74 and Sunday School enrollment at 100. He also reported that the Ladies' Aid Society had raised \$569.00 for church purposes and that a new sidewalk costing \$118.00 had been built and paid for. He declared the church would soon be free from debt. That happy condition soon existed, but not for long, as we shall presently see.

Rev. Creath was good natured and obliging. Once when this writer was absent his wife wanted a cat killed and wished the job on to Rev. Creath, who cheerfully performed it. He was moved to Pine Bluffs in 1916; afterwards he filled charges in Illinois and Indiana. His wife was a beautiful brunette, tall and slender, very nervous and seemingly delicate, but she has outlived Rev. Creath many years. Now, as Mrs. Robert A. Matlock, she lives in Jeffersonville, Indiana, across the Ohio River from Louisville, Kentucky. She has written and published two books, one of them a novel of over 500 pages.

### REV. RALPH M. JONES

Rev. Jones, his wife, Frances, and her adopted sister, Ruth Kiger, came to Basin in September, 1916. Rev. Jones was an energetic, tireless worker, naturally and by reason of experience a leader, possessing a magnetic personality, a man with great persuasive power. Doubtless he would have gone far and reaped great emoluments if he had ever chosen to be a life insurance salesman. He set about building up the church membership. Whether or not he at that time made a mental appraisal of the resources and potentialities of the church and community is not now known. Whether or not he subsequently did that, we know, and we know whether or not his judgment was accurate.

At the conference in Buffalo in 1917 he reported a membership of 107 and Sunday School enrollment of 171; at Torrington the next year he reported 131 members and Sunday School enrollment of 200.

Basin, which today is not a large town, was smaller then, but so much bustle and activity were in evidence that it was deceiving. The post-war boom had not spent itself, there was no unemployment, and people everywhere viewed the prospect through rose colored glasses. The church building had become inadequate or was about to become so.

This writer has in his custody a small book containing the minutes of what are sometimes styled the Executive Committee, sometimes the Building Committee and at other times the Advisory Committee.

The only business transacted at a meeting on June 23, 1919, was that of voting \$400.00 to Rev. Jones "to pay for the expenses of his trip to Mayo Bros."; also \$200.00 "for his added and successful labor on building project."

At that time no contract had been let or bids called for, and no plans or specifications had been adopted. The writer has been informed that the labor performed by Rev. Jones was that of soliciting subscriptions to the building fund, but that no further commissions were paid him, to his great disappointment and grief.

Rev. Jones' report to Conference that year in Sheridan gave membership at 148 and Sunday School enrollment as 242.

At a meeting in October it was voted to notify subscribers to the building fund that their first payments were then due. The book records minutes of a meeting on November 2, "held after church on Sunday evening."

Rev. Jones conferred often with the heads of the three local banks, who insisted that the program should not involve an outlay in excess of \$30,000.00. That amount wouldn't go far now, but even if it would, it would be quite an undertaking, and our membership is now crowding the 400 mark. Most of the pledges were secured from people outside the church.

After rejecting the first bids, scaling down the plans and opening new bids on April 1, 1920, the contract was let to a local firm, whose figure was \$29,990.00. The little book records minutes of a meeting on April 22 at which bids for plumbing were considered. No further minutes appear in the book. Excavation for the basement was soon under way on two corner lots adjoining the church.

The Conference that year moved Rev. Jones to Lander. Several years later he and his wife moved to California; he died many years ago.

### REV. EDWARD BOWLING

Rev. Bowling began preaching in the Southern Illinois Conference in 1906. From 1908 to 1913 he filled charges in Colorado, including two in Denver. He was then transferred to Pine Bluffs in the Wyoming Conference. In 1918, 1919 and 1920 he was Treasurer of the Conference.

In September, 1920 he and his wife, Carrie, and their two children came to Basin, where he faced a difficult and trying situation, one calling for the exercise of most of the Christian virtues; fortunately he was not lacking in those qualities.

Subscriptions to the building fund were payable in instalments if the donors desired, and most of them so wished. Payments had been coming in fairly well, work on the building was progressing, and an elaborate ceremony of laying the corner stone was planned. On October 12 the corner stone was laid by Temple Lodge No. 20, A. F. & A. M., of Basin, acting for and on behalf of the Wyoming Grand Lodge. The dedicatory address was made by Rev. L. C. Thompson, the Big Horn Basin's first minister, who was present with his Masonic brethren, and it must have been highly gratifying to that good man to realize how his labors in the Master's vineyard were bearing fruit.

Early the following year the church was in serious financial difficulties and work on the new building had halted. Many subscribers to the building fund had not paid their instalments, and the contractor could not take care of his payroll or bills for material.

Many of the delinquents excused themselves on the ground that Rev. Jones had represented to them that they were to help build a community church and they had in time discovered that it was not to be one. It was a convenient excuse, but it seems likely that the real reason was that they had been overpersuaded and Rev. Jones was no longer here. Both he and they should have known better. Just what they expected to find in a community church that they could not have received in any other church is a question. A few people still contend that if Rev. Jones had not been moved he could have collected all subscriptions or most of them. That is doubtful, as the country was then gripped by a financial stringency. Be that as it may, many of the subscribers claimed that they had been "gypped."

A separate arrangement for finishing the basement was made with the contractor, and on Easter Sunday, 1922, the first services were held there.

In May one of the local banks closed its doors, owing to heavy withdrawals and inability to realize on its assets.

The old church building was sold and moved away; the church bell was loaned to the Worland fire department. The contractor has told that a local lawyer who was prominent in the local lodge of a secret order, proposed that the contractor assign to the lodge his claim against the church; he would thus receive his pay; the lodge would

complete the building for its own use. The contractor consulted his wife; she, being a very devout woman, though a member of another denomination, begged him to not let the church down. And about that time, the contractor tells, "a nice old gentleman" who was a church dignitary of some sort, came to town and he assured the contractor he would be paid. Work was then resumed on the building.

Later in the year work was again halted. A meeting of the church officers, committees, members and other interested persons was held in the church basement the evening of December 15. An atmosphere of gloom pervaded. It was the general opinion of those present that for the church to have begun building at the time it did was a mistake amounting almost to a crime.<sup>3</sup> However, it was agreed that the only thing to be done was to finish the building, though by what means was not clear.

The Church Extension Board of the General Conference made another advance of \$10,000, and work was resumed.

The beautiful leaded glass windows in our church were a gift of Mrs. Ann E. Allen as a memorial to her deceased husband, James D. Allen. The Allen family had come from northern Colorado in 1887 and located on Paint Rock Creek. Mr. Allen, a Civil War veteran, was an influential and public spirited citizen. He and his wife in time moved to Basin.

On February 5, 1923, the church was dedicated by Bishop Charles L. Mead.

The church then owed the Church Extension Board of the General Conference \$20,000.00. (Some persons place the figure slightly higher.) It also owed the contractor \$5300.00, a subcontractor \$600.00 and a painter \$56.00; what if anything was done about those debts this story will later reveal.

At the Conference in Laramie that year Rev. Bowling reported a membership of 177 and Sunday School enrollment of 215.

On March 13, 1924, Harvey J. Spencer, a young man who was President of the Epworth League and faithful in his duty to the church, was called home. The beautiful communion table in the church was a gift from the Epworth League as a memorial to him.

That year Basin had its third bank failure, the second having occurred the year before.

In the fall Rev. Bowling became District Superintendent and moved to Cheyenne. He now resides in California.

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3. Big Horn County Rustler.

**REV. ALVIN R. DICKSON**

Rev. Dickson and his wife, Grace, came to Basin in September, 1924; he was deeply devoted to the cause and impressed all with his sincerity. During his first year here the church received many new members, but many inactive ones were dropped, leaving the total about as it was. Conference in 1925 returned him to Basin, and he was also elected conference statistician; but in December he transferred to a charge in Salt Lake City, Utah.

William F. Johnson, head of the first Christian family in Basin and one of the organizers of the church, went to his reward.

**REV. WILLIAM T. METHVIN**

Rev. Methvin and his wife were not yet in middle age. Both were of pleasing personality and he was a tireless worker for the cause.

Our church and the town were greatly honored in June, 1926, when they entertained the Wyoming State Conference. The honor and privilege has come to us but once. Statistics at that time showed the church membership as 201 and Sunday School enrollment 224.

There were quite a number of Presbyterians in Basin. They had some years before bought lots and were looking forward to building. Their women's society was large and very active. But by 1927 they had abandoned their project and all or most of them united with the Methodist Church.

At the Conference in the fall, Rev. Methvin was transferred. He had done good work while here.

**REV. JAMES L. WILLIAMS**

Rev. Williams, an Englishman by birth, came in September, 1928, with his wife, Amanda, and their two children. The daughter then was about nine. If what neighbors told was true she must have been a human fly; they declare that she climbed almost to the top of the church, on the outside.

In June, 1930, Rev. Williams promised to perform a wedding ceremony in the writer's family, but forgot and while the crowd waited he was sternly reminded by the bridegroom.

During the three years he was here the additions to the church little more than offset the losses; the figure reported to the Conference in 1931 was 203. Rev. Williams was then moved to Wheatland.

### REV. NELSON A. WURGLER

Rev. Wurgler, his wife, Florence, their small daughter, Jean, and infant daughter, Joan, came in August, 1931. Rev. Wurgler and wife were about thirty years of age. They made a good impression, which turned out to be lasting. The work went on smoothly.

The pastor's wife was a talented musician, and most of the time while here gave piano lessons which doubtless was a welcome addition to the family income.

A son, James, was born in the parsonage in 1933.

The report to the Conference that year showed a membership of 283, a gain of 80 in two years.

Although the church building had been occupied ten years since completion, little or nothing had been done about its debt, but the Extension Board wasn't letting it forget; as for the contractor, although he was a poor man, he had no illusions about collecting his pay. There were few if any wealthy people in the church; it was during depression times and the New Deal. Some of the people said "The church is here; they'll not take it away."

The report to Conference in 1937 showed 202 members and Sunday School enrollment of 157; evidently many had been dropped from the rolls. Rev. Wurgler had served six years in Basin. He was transferred to Colorado Springs, Colorado, later to a charge in New Mexico and at last accounts was in Marfa, Texas.

### REV. DAVID A. GREGG

Rev. Gregg, when he came with his wife, was 64 years of age. A native of Texas, he had been a newspaper man before entering the ministry in the M. E. Church, South. Before coming to Basin he had filled charges in Colorado, Utah and elsewhere.

The report to Conference in 1938 showed church membership as 226, a gain of 24, and Sunday School enrollment as 132, a loss of 25.

Rev. Gregg was quiet and studious by nature, though not reserved. He was a gardening enthusiast with a knack of making things grow; during 1938 and the two years following he made the church property a beauty spot. It was during 1938 that iron railings were placed on both sides of the church steps, thanks to Mrs. Mary Avery, who was always thoughtful of others.

The debt of the church was still a plague to all concerned. Just before Rev. Gregg went to the General Conference, Mrs. Mary Avery, solicitous as usual for the welfare of her



church, approached him quietly to offer \$5,000.00 provided the Church Extension Board would accept the amount in cancellation of the debt. Rev. Gregg followed her instructions and made the offer, which was declined.

The report to the Annual Conference in 1940 showed a church membership of 187 and Sunday School enrollment of 157. Rev. Gregg was assigned to the charge at Pine Bluffs, where as usual he set about beautifying the church grounds and making things grow. In February, 1942, he rested from his labors and was buried at Pine Bluffs. His widow has since been teaching in Oklahoma and Texas.

### **REV. SAMUEL A. C. GROVE**

Rev. Grove came in July, 1940, with his wife, Marjorie, and their two children. He had pastored Trinity Church, in St. Louis, in 1933 and 1934, then had joined the Wyoming Conference and filled charges at Sundance and Pine Bluffs. He and his wife were well liked in Basin and he was regarded as a very able minister. He obtained leave of absence from the Conference, resigned his charge and left with his family on June 22, 1941. He has ever since been a chaplain in the United States Army, filling that position with great credit and has been in many parts of the world.

### **REV. C. BENNETT WARE**

Rev. Ware and his wife, Inez, a couple in late middle age, came alone; he had transferred from the South Georgia Conference. He had preached twenty-eight years, including seven years in Indiana. He was an able and conscientious minister. He served here two years. At the Conference in 1943 he reported membership at 198 and Sunday School enrollment 94. He was moved to Rock Springs, two years later to Buffalo; after three years there he transferred to the Memphis Conference and was assigned to the work in Germantown, Tennessee.

### **REV. RUFUS D. WEBSTER**

Rev. Webster and his wife, Martha, were an elderly couple and came alone. He began preaching in the Southwest Kansas Conference in 1911 and filled many charges in that state and Colorado, including Denver. In 1942 he had transferred to the Wyoming Conference and served at Kemmerer before coming to Basin.

The greater part of 1944 he was employed in a local lumber yard.

Until that year there had been no garage on the church lots, and if pastors could not rent garage space or if it was not donated them their cars remained out in the weather the year round. In 1944 P. P. Anderson agreed to donate an unused hen house provided the church would move it away; this was done and the building became a garage.

The indebtedness to the Church Extension Board at that time was, in round numbers, \$16,000.00; the board proposed to cancel it for \$4,000.00, and an effort to raise the money was begun.

Late in 1944 Rev. Webster resigned his charge and moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, later serving on the Carpenter Circuit in Wyoming, and at Pavillion. He was placed on the retired list at his request in 1949.

### REV. FRED W. MARTIN

In February, 1945, Rev. Martin came with his wife, Mary, their son Mearl and daughter Marilyn, both high school students. Rev. Martin, an energetic and sincere worker, began preaching in 1928 and had filled charges in Iowa, Wyoming and Kansas.

By strenuous and persistent work the amount needed to satisfy the requirement of the Church Extension Board was raised, and early that year the mortgage was burned by the late T. P. Bollman during appropriate services celebrating the event. Letters from a number of former pastors were read. It was truly a time of great rejoicing.

People had given until it hurt and could do nothing about the debts due the contractor and the two other men and they were forgotten in the upsurge of life and growth of the church later on, and the church has made other commitments that have taxed the ability of the members to the utmost.

The old church bell was returned from Worland that year and after lying on the ground some time was finally put in place.

The report to Conference showed membership at 194; Sunday School enrollment had dropped to 65.

Early in 1946 Rev. Rose and wife, evangelists, held a series of meetings in the church, without result.

During the winter which followed the pastor's wife was employed picking beans in a local elevator. Rev. Martin resigned and left with his family in February, 1947. He first was at Carson, Iowa, later with the Sheldahl-Slater charge. Because of one thing this writer will remember Rev. Martin after he has forgotten some of the others.

Whenever he called at the writer's home he never left without first saying "Shall we have a word of prayer?" That is also a habit of Rev. Floyd Ellison, Baptist minister, of Basin. "Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them."

### REV. T. STACY RIDDICK

Rev. Riddick, with his wife, Margaret, arrived in time to conduct services on Easter Sunday, 1947. He began preaching in the Memphis Conference of the great M. E. Church, South, in 1930, filling charges in Memphis, Bolivar and Greenfield. During those pastorates he studied at Lambuth College where he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts; at Emory Union School of Theology where he received the degree of Bachelor of Divinity; also at Garrett (Evanston, Ill.).

In Basin it soon became apparent that Rev. Riddick was a man with a message, and the church began to feel new life. In the fall a new pulpit, choir screen and chancel rail were placed in the church, the accoustics were improved, the interior refinished and redecorated and the exterior woodwork given two coats of white paint, the parsonage redecorated and new furniture installed. Later that fall the church was the first in the state to reach its quota for a retired ministers' pension fund. In fact it was oversubscribed \$77.00 making a total of \$927.00. At the Conference in June the membership reported was 260 with Sunday School enrollment 246, a gain of 37 per cent for one and 139 per cent for the other. Later a Hammond electric organ and choir robes were bought with a fund raised by subscription; C. C. Peters topped the list with \$500.00. The following May a handsome and substantial bulletin board was placed at the street intersection.

The report to Conference in June (1949) showed a membership of 340, a year's gain of almost thirty-one per cent. Rev. Riddick was granted five months leave of absence in order to study at the University of Edinburgh. Rev. Edward White was designated supply pastor and came with his wife, Della, on June 9; they were an elderly couple. He had then completed four years in the Lovell-Deaver charge and previously had pastored in Colorado and Utah. District Superintendent J. Clyde Keegan described him as "a hard-driving brother in more ways than one; he gets things done."

Rev. Riddick and wife returned from Europe in November and Rev. White took over the work at Hyattville and Ten Sleep.

During December a beautiful pulpit lamp, the gift of Mrs. Cornelia Metz, was placed in the church. In January the Womans Society of Christian Service at a cost of \$1,000.00 carpeted the center aisle of the church, the space in the rear, also behind and in front of the chancel rail. In the spring concrete steps into the basement from the outside were built, the money being raised by subscriptions. The work was supervised and most of it done by Hubert C. Avery who as a member of the Property Committee has been efficient and unsparing in his attention to the building.

As the time for Conference neared Rev. Riddick was offered his choice of several large charges, but he preferred to be closer to the center of the nation, and in June the Conference at his request transferred him to the St. Louis Conference. He was stationed by that Conference at Cabool at a salary of \$2400.00; in Basin he would have received \$3600.00. Last October he was moved to DeSoto, Missouri, to be pastor of the Fourth Street Methodist Church.<sup>4</sup>

### REV. EDWIN F. ESHELMAN

Rev. Eshelman came from the Northeast Ohio Conference; his last charge there had been at Madison and he had afterwards studied at the University of Edinburgh. He is a graduate of Muskingum College, also of Boston University School of Theology and has filled pastorates in Cambridge, Ohio, and Clinton, Massachusetts. He and his wife, Sara, and two small boys arrived in Basin July 1, 1950. He is a tireless worker and popular with the younger element; the church continues growing.

On October 1, John T. Bishop on behalf of the Bishop family presented the church with a massive brass table set consisting of two collection plates and two candlesticks, in memory of his father, the late Thomas K. Bishop. On November 22 Robert L. Henderson, Jr., on behalf of the Henderson family, presented the church with a beautiful baptismal font in memory of his mother, the late Mrs. Flossie Henderson. On November 26 a beautiful illuminated cross which was hung a few days before in the church porch was presented the church by Mrs. Percy W. Metz and her sister, Mrs. C. F. Nicklos, in memory of their late parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Keiser. These good ladies, serving on the Flower Committee, have been faithful and

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4. Rev. and Mrs. Riddick were killed in a collision on a California highway while returning from the General Conference in San Francisco in May, 1952.

have never failed us. On February 4, 1951, a beautiful brass cross which now hangs back of the pulpit, was presented the church by Mr. and Mrs. Hubert C. Avery in memory of the former's mother, the late Mrs. Mary Avery.

## IN CONCLUSION

Perhaps there are still living some persons who as adults left the Big Horn Basin fifty or more years ago and have not since been back. If so and were they to return, it would amaze them to drive in the daytime over smooth, paved highways, through rich farming areas dotted with oil rigs, and to drive at night through large towns blazing with neon signs and through a countryside with R. E. A. lighting.

It would have amazed them had they been in the new high school gymnasium in Basin the evening of January 19, when bands and choruses from eighteen Big Horn Basin towns were present. Had they been here in March they would have been amazed at the revival meetings held in every town of any size in the basin. One of them began at Greybull March 1 and moved to Basin March 19. At the time this is written the results in Basin were 51 conversions, 41 backsliders reclaimed and 37 renewals of faith; it is expected that complete reports will bring the total to 140. On the night of March 29 the Wigwam Theater was packed. There were present Basin, Greybull and Thermopolis Baptists, Basin and Greybull Nazarenes, Greybull Presbyterians, Worland Lutherans, all with their pastors, and a few Basin Methodists, also a monster crowd of Worland Methodists with their pastor; he made a fervent opening prayer and all ministers worked afterwards in the inquiry room. About thirty young men and young women dedicated their lives to service as missionaries, nurses and teachers, and four young men pledged to become ministers. It was a scene that will linger in memory. Truly, we have come a long way in the basin.

Our church, also, has come a long way. Some of the going has seemed rough, but there will be more hurdles, and of a different nature, with the real test yet to come, one that people of a church sometimes face without being aware of it; and thus the future of the church will be exactly what its people make for it or permit to be made for it. In a world of change and confusion our people travel the road of today as it stretches ahead to the far horizon. What awaits them no one can foretell. Gloomy days may come, but faith speaks of clearing skies on the morrow, and they go on, hopeful and unafraid.

**GETTIN' MY SOUL INTO SHAPE**

(By the author of the history)

I've had no such thrill since the day I was born  
As will come when I'm wakened by Gabriel's horn,  
Wherever I sleep on that radiant morn,  
Under cactus, or where willows drape.  
With the multitude then very soon I shall wait;  
When my number is drawn I'll check in through the  
gate;  
And the way I've lived here will determine my fate,  
So I'm gettin' my soul into shape.

To learn how to be saved, in the Book we must  
search;  
If we think our lodge tells us we're left in the lurch,  
And it takes more than mere membership in a church,  
Outward form of religion to ape.  
God wants no one up there who's a stranger to him;  
If but slightly acquainted one's chances are slim,  
And it won't be real pleasant caught out on a limb.  
Well, I'm gettin' my soul into shape.

Some, who have never got close to God on their knees  
Feel so sure of his mercy they do as they please;  
And they say that they'll clear Judgment hurdles with  
ease,  
That they'll get around any red tape;  
That their parents and neighbors were good folks, the  
dears;  
And got by; they live like them, why have any fears?  
Well, it's too soon to know who got by, it appears.  
Me, I'm gettin' my soul into shape.

We all make good resolves, but sin nature is strong.  
Once I tried all alone to dodge error and wrong,  
And I've oft wished old Samson would happen along  
To hold them so I might escape.  
But One stronger than Samson has come to my aid  
By my trustin' in Him when my prayers have been  
made.  
Glory be to His name! Now I'm makin' the grade,  
And I'm gettin' my soul into shape.

# *Wyoming Zephyrs*

By

THE EDITOR

The Wyoming State Historical Department has moved into new quarters in the recently completed State Office Building in Cheyenne. The museum, which occupies the south wing of the building, was opened to the public on April 28. The more spacious quarters have enabled the staff to arrange the displays in a very attractive manner.

The museum is divided into several areas to enable visitors to better enjoy the exhibits. Main areas are the Indian, pioneer, wild life, geology, stock growers and forts and trails sections.

The historical records, gathered over the years from pioneers in the state, the nearly 4,400 volumes of state newspapers, the pictures, maps, books, pamphlets, and the archival records of state offices and former state officials which have been placed in the department were all moved into the new quarters and are now being made available for the use of researchers.

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The State Historical Department recently had the opportunity to acquire the negative collection of the late Joseph E. Stimson, pioneer photographer of Cheyenne. The pictures in this collection cover every corner of the state and date from 1900-1950. Numbering between six and seven thousand glass plate negatives, it is one of the most valuable and significant collections of the West today.

Wyoming has lost too many significant collections through apathy and disinterest. In order to save this collection for Wyoming it was necessary to act quickly, for organizations outside of Wyoming were more than interested in acquiring it. Consequently, while \$1,300 in state funds were obtained toward the purchase of the negatives, it was necessary to obtain a loan of \$700 to complete the transaction, and the loan must now be repaid.

A number of interested persons have already contributed to the fund to repay the \$700. Contributors to date are: George E. Brimmer, Cheyenne; J. Elmer Brock, Kaycee; Fred Marble, Cheyenne; Judge and Mrs. P. W. Metz, Basin;

Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Nicklos, Basin; Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Pence, Laramie; George B. Pryde, Rock Springs; H. N. Roach, Laramie; E. Keith Thomson, Cheyenne; Henryetta Berry, Lola M. Homsher and Mrs. Winifred S. Kienzle of Cheyenne.

Contributions to this fund should be marked "Stimson Fund" and mailed to this department.

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The Wyoming State Historical Department in cooperation with the Community Club of Ft. Laramie sponsored services at the grave site of Mary E. Homsley in observance of the centennial date of her death on the Oregon Trail June 10, 1852. Services were held on Sunday, June 8 at 2:30 p.m.

Reverend George Woodard of Ft. Laramie, who gave the invocation at the first services held at this grave site in 1926, gave the invocation. Mr. Clarke P. Rice of Torrington told of his finding the gravestone and grave site in 1925. Mr. W. W. Morrison of Cheyenne, historian of the old Oregon Trail who has become acquainted with descendants of Mary Homsley and has learned her story from them, talked on "Mary E. Homsley—Her Family". Mr. David L. Hieb, Superintendent of the Ft. Laramie National Monument, reviewed the history of the Oregon Trail and stressed that the services honoring Mary E. Homsley honored all pioneers who braved the frontier and fell along the way.

Mr. Tom Mort of Lingle led the group in singing, after which Mr. R. J. Rymill of Ft. Laramie introduced some of the members of the audience, including Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Pence, L. C. Bishop, Joe Weppner, Mrs. L. G. Flannery, Tom Green, Charles Frederick, Mead Sandercock, Mangus Larsen, Jim Fleanor, and Ike and Dick Darnells.

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On January 7, 1952, Miss Mildred McIntosh passed away in Cheyenne. Miss McIntosh, daughter of Robert and Mary Ellen McIntosh who founded a ranch on the Snake River in the 1880's, was a resident of Slater, Colorado, for thirty years. At that place she was the postmistress, the owner of a picturesque old-fashioned general store and a prominent rancher. A graduate of both the University of Wyoming and Wellsley College, Miss McIntosh was an authority on Wyoming history and did considerable writing on that subject.



On February 8, 1952, John Charles Thompson, editor emeritus of the Wyoming State Tribune, died in Cheyenne at the age of 72. A Wyoming newspaperman since 1897, with all of his experience at Cheyenne, he was a member of a prominent pioneer family of that city. His extensive work on statewide news beats, his editorials and his columns "Cheyenne, Wyoming" and "In Old Wyoming" established him as one of the state's best known and most prominent men.

On February 8, 1952, Joseph Stimson, former Cheyenne artist and photographer, succumbed to a heart attack at Hartford, Connecticut, at the age of 81. Mr. Stimson was at one time photographer for the Union Pacific Railroad. His collection of negatives covers a period of more than 50 years and is one of the most valuable collections of Wyoming pictures in existence.

D. C. Wilhelm of Gillette passed away in Sheridan on December 31, 1951, after an extensive illness. Mr. Wilhelm came to Gillette in 1916 and in the early 1920's began collecting early day historical data on Campbell County, publishing the items in a clever advertising sheet, the "Flatyre". He also became a zealous collector of Indian artifacts and local early day relics of the area and at one time had a private museum which he opened to the public.

On March 31, 1952, Dr. Aven Nelson, the first faculty member hired by the first Board of Trustees of the University of Wyoming, President Emeritus of the University, and world famous botanist, passed away in Colorado Springs at the age of 93. Dr. Nelson was a civic leader, teacher, researcher and writer. Over the years he did much for the state of Wyoming and brought many honors to Wyoming as a result of his work in his special field of botany.

Wilson S. Kimball, 85, pioneer businessman and former mayor of Casper and long-time member of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, died April 4, 1952, after an illness of several months. He was a resident of Casper for 62 years where he served nine terms as mayor. Upon his retirement from the drug business in 1947 he engaged in ranching east of Casper.

On March 3, 1952, Mrs. Catherina Facinelli of Rock Springs passed away at the age of 85. Born in Austria, Mrs. Facinelli came to the United States in 1886 and to Wyoming in 1887. She and her family have been prominent in local and state affairs for many years. She is survived by two sons, Victor J. and Thomas P. of Rock Springs, and Mrs. C. E. Bon of Cheyenne.

Mrs. John Whitaker passed away at the age of 82 on June 8, 1952, in Cheyenne. She was a member of a long-time prominent Wyoming family and had resided in the state since territorial days.

Mrs. Isabella Kinnear, daughter of Jim Baker, the famous pioneer Indian scout and later a rancher of the Baggs area, passed away on June 10, 1952, at the Wind River Indian Hospital, Ft. Washakie, at the age of 89.

William Jones, 80, Fremont County pioneer, passed away June 9, 1952, at Lander. He was born at South Pass City in 1871 where his father ran a meat market in that old gold mining camp. A life-time friend of the Indians, Mr. Jones spoke both the Arapahoe and Shoshone tongues fluently. He was at one time mayor of Lander.

The following tribute was written by Mrs. Agnes Wright Spring, historian and member of a pioneer Wyoming family, and at present the Executive Assistant to the President of the Colorado State Historical Society:

From all corners of the state of Wyoming and from Montana and other parts of the West, cattle kings, cowboys, ranch cooks, sheepmen and herders, state and county officials, and friends of high and low station gathered at Buffalo, Wyoming, on January 25, 1952, to pay their last tribute to Mrs. Martin A. Tisdale, a former State Librarian of Wyoming. Mrs. Tisdale died on January 22 as the result of an automobile accident, which occurred on a branch road from Kaycee as the Tisdales were returning from a trip to Denver's Stock Show.

Daughter of one of Wyoming's pioneer ranchmen and a relative of the late Governor Joseph M. Carey, Mrs. Tisdale was born Frances Angelina Davis on December 8, 1887, at Milford, Delaware. Her parents were Annie Paynter Marshall Davis and Henry Winter ("Hard Winter") Davis. Her father came to Wyoming in 1878 and in November, 1881, established the Spectacle Ranch on Powder River. He was a member of the first state legislature of Wyoming in 1890.

Frances Davis received her schooling at her father's ranch, also in schools at Buffalo and at Miss Roney's School at Bala, Pennsylvania. She served as State Librarian under Governor Joseph M. Carey and Acting-Governor Frank L. Houx from 1913 to 1917. On December 13, 1917, she was married to Martin Allison Tisdale of Johnson County at the Trinity Cathedral in Omaha. Their romance was similar to that of a story book, as the families of each had been identified with opposite sides of the famous so-called "Johnson County Cattlemen's War."

The Tisdales established their first home on a ranch at Mayoworth. Later they moved to Buffalo where Mr. Tisdale served as sheriff of Johnson County for sixteen years. Since 1943 he has been manager of the Three T ranch near Kaycee.

At the time of her death Mrs. Tisdale was President of St. Luke's Auxiliary in Buffalo. She is survived by her husband; a daughter, Mary Bradford Hinckley; two sons, Thomas Martin Tisdale and Robins Davis Tisdale; by three brothers, Henry Winter Davis of Ft. Washakie, Mark Jay Davis of Casper, and Francis Robins Davis of Tensleep; and two sisters, Dorothy Bell Gibbs of Recluse, Wyoming, and Madelene Marshall Murphy of Kingsbury, California.

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Two loans to the State Museum are now on display. An elk skin painted by Charles Washakie, fourth son of the famous old Shoshone, Chief Washakie, has been loaned by Mrs. Mable Cheney Moudy of Laramie. The picture on the skin represents the Buffalo Hunt with dancers dancing the Buffalo Dance in thanks for successful hunting. The skin was tanned by Ellen Hereford Washakie and the elk was killed by Mrs. Moudy's father, Ervin F. Cheney, pioneer of the Lander area.

The buckskin suit and headdress of Chief High Eagle, Sioux Indian who took part with the Indians in the Custer Battle of 1876, was presented to the Cheyenne Frontier Days Committee following the death of the Chief in an automobile accident the past winter. Chief High Eagle had for many years been a member of the Indian group which attended the Cheyenne Frontier Days celebration each year, and his last request was that his costume which he had worn at Frontier Days be given to the Cheyenne Frontier Days Committee. The Committee has given it to the State Museum on a loan basis for display.

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### Recent Acquisitions

Mr. W. R. Coe of New York City has given to the State Historical Department a valuable gift of more than two hundred historical books and an equal number of historical periodicals. The books, ranging in date from 1833 to the present, cover a wide variety of subjects, all on the western theme. This addition to the small but fine library in the department is a very important one. In addition Mr. Coe

has had sent to the department from time to time recent publications just off the press.

The Coe Collection of Western Americana has been on special display in one of the cases in the museum, and visitors have found it of special interest. The books are at present being cataloged and will be available to researchers and students working in the library of the department.

From the dismantled home of the late Governor Joseph M. Carey the members of his family have given to the State Museum a mantel piece from the front hallway and the nine and one-half foot door with full length mirror that hung between Governor Carey's study and sitting room. These have been placed in the museum so that they form a setting in the pioneer area.

Mr. Don Stanfield of the Wyoming Typewriter and Equipment Company, Cheyenne, has added ten early typewriters to a similar collection now on display in the museum. Mr. George S. Clason of Napa, California, presented a collection of arrowheads collected by his brother Horace from near Cheyenne in the early days. Heston D. Adams of Golden, Colorado, gave a statement of Neustadter Bros. to the Meeteetse Clothing Co. and a check of the Shoshone Mountain Mining Co. Mrs. G. I. Baldwin of Mineola, Long Island, New York, presented the book **Recollections of a Busy Life** by Horace Greeley. Mrs. Charles W. Clark of Cheyenne has given a four piece commode set of semi-porcelain Dresden.

A case built especially to display the Richardson family collection has been presented to the department by Warren Richardson of Cheyenne, Clarence B. Richardson of Casper, and Laura V. and Mary Valeria Richardson of Cheyenne. It has been placed in the museum, and on display in it are a number of pioneer items from the Richardson home in Cheyenne.

A manuscript "The Overland Trail Through Wyoming" has been received from Willard Fox of LaGrange, and a manuscript "Reminiscences of Norris Griggs" by Mrs. Helen Sargent of Big Piney has been given by the author. Mr. W. W. Morrison of Cheyenne presented a copy of his article on "Pattison Lake", a historical sketch on Oregon history. Mrs. J. William Richardson of Cheyenne presented five ledgers from the cattle company of Andrew Gilchrist, early cattleman of Wyoming, and his sword. Mr. Charles Humphrey of Laramie gave the department a map of Laramie, Wyoming, dated 1884. Harry Carnine of Laramie presented an 1873 Winchester rifle, without the stock, found on the Laramie Plains. Miss Alby E. Roys of St. Petersburg, Florida, has given a copy of the newspaper **Palladium**

of Liberty, February 25, 1813, Morris-Town, N. J. Mike Sorg of Cheyenne presented two books: **Herringshaw's American Statesman**, 1906, and **House Miscellaneous Document**, 1888-89, vol. 2.

Dr. Franklin D. Yoder of Cheyenne presented the letter from Governor Joseph M. Carey to his father, B. F. Yoder, appointing him a Commissioner to organize the County of Goshen in 1911. Mrs. J. M. Harrington of Basin presented three albums of negatives, numbering approximately 200, of scenes in the Big Horn Basin about 1910. Dr. Paul W. Emerson of Cheyenne presented a constable badge worn by William Pleasant Snowden, first white settler in Omaha, Nebraska, 1854; spectacles and case used by Rachel Snowden, first white woman to settle in Omaha, Nebraska, a meal ticket from the Moore Hotel issued to Elam S. Emerson, U.P.R.R. engineer in Cheyenne 1880-85, his complete uniform worn in World War I, his footlocker, and a number of other items for the pioneer section of the museum.

Mr. M. B. Rhodes of Basin presented a picture of Tom Daggett (1899), editor of the Big Horn County Rustler, and Mrs. Rhodes gave two souvenir copper cups from the Black Hills of South Dakota showing early scenes of that area. Mrs. Mark A. Chapman presented a historical collection gathered by her husband, the late Mark A. Chapman. Included in this are pictures of Camp Carlin, Cheyenne, and early Wyoming scenes; early United States currency including Continental, Confederate and State issues; badges; seals; correspondence and business records. Mrs. Mart Christensen presented a wool challis shawl brought from Ireland about 1825 by her grandmother. W. W. Morrison of Cheyenne and William Rodenbush of Ft. Laramie presented pictures taken of the services at the grave of Mary E. Homsley June 8, 1952.

Mr. L. C. Bishop of Cheyenne presented to the department a 12 gauge Ithaca shotgun, London twist barrel, hammer gun, 1892, which was originally purchased by his father, S. A. Bishop. Since then L. C. Bishop, his five brothers and his two sons have used the gun for a period of sixty years.

## *Book Reviews*

**The Story of the Little Big Horn.** By Col. W. A. Graham. (The Military Service Publishing Co., 1952, 222 pp. \$5.00)

**Legend into History.** By Charles Kuhlman. (The Stackpole Company, 1951, 245 pp. \$5.00) (Both books offered in combination at \$9.00)

**The Story of the Little Big Horn** by Col. W. A. Graham is a 4th printing, initially printed in 1926. Little new has been added to the work, nothing apparent has been deleted. In the Appendix is a copy, from the Journal of The Military Service Institution, of the article by Col. Robert P. Hughes, Inspector General, printed in 1896.

**Legend into History** by Charles Kuhlman is a new publication, and is supplemented in Appendix II with a copy of the findings of the Court of Inquiry which was convened in 1879 at the request of Major Reno.

Both books cover the same scope of the battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876, which occurred in Southern Montana between the Seventh Cavalry commanded by Lt. Col. G. A. Custer and the plains Indians, led primarily by Chiefs Gall and Crazy Horse. Both books are heavily footnoted in Appendices, that of Col. Graham being more one of quotations of authority type, while that of Dr. Kuhlman being largely supporting argument of the author. Each book is accompanied by a contour map of the battlefield, U. S. Geological Survey, showing the different conceptions of the route followed by Custer's command in arriving at the battlefield, which are helpful to the reader, if he is skilled in map reading, in understanding the terrain in the critical area, and following the author's version.

**The Story of the Little Big Horn** is a factual account of the Campaign taken from sworn testimony, concrete evidence and known facts, with little effort to inject opinion, conjecture or hearsay to fill the gaps in the Custer disaster. It is a very well arranged and illustrated narrative, easy to read and informative to the casual reader as well as the self-styled Custer expert. It is beyond question one of the best works on this highly controverted historical incident and should be on the shelf of every western and military book fan.

**Legend into History** is an attempt, as the title implies, to convert the legend of the Custer fight to historical standing. To accomplish this very difficult task, the author has combined known facts, battlefield evidence and testimony with a detailed terrain study and supplemented these with Indian tales told by both combatants and non-combatants, principally of the Cheyenne tribe, and endeavored to fit all of this into his own appreciation of battle operations and tactics. The entire work is impregnated with inconsistencies and illusions. The author does not profess to be a professional soldier; admits that for the most part Indian narratives are totally unreliable; and concedes that seventy-five years of erosion have had a profound effect upon terrain features. The reader will be impressed, however, that he places rather great weight upon battlefield indications in spite of the fact that the ground was pounded, mauled and ravaged by thousands of Indians (men, women and children) for hours after hostilities had ceased, leaving one in serious doubt as to the value of such indications, or how you could visualize order arising out of such chaos. There is even an effort to reproduce troop positions and sectors, strong points, fire sectors, retrograde movements and other tactical dispositions and maneuvers, all based upon the assumption that the position was organized for defense when there is most weighty and convincing evidence that the engagement was initially offensive in nature, hastily planned and lacking in coordination and so fluid by consequence as to be devoid of all these orderly considerations. He also delves into logistics, entirely irreconcilable, and devoid of professional appreciation of this military specialty.

The entire treatment is a bold, but to say the least, speculative, endeavor which the average reader will find neither interesting nor informative.

**The Story of the Little Big Horn** is set down in chronological order, simply stated and developed without confusion of detail or contradiction. Even to the reader who has only story interest in this fascinating historical incident there will be no difficulty in understanding and following the action and its dire consequences, and he will emerge with a rather clear picture of the known action.

On the other hand, **Legend into History** is exceedingly difficult to read. There is a mass of meaningless detail to the average reader which will almost foreclose his following the action or appreciating the author's philosophy of the where, when, and how of the engagement. A great many battle veterans and those of military trained minds

will be in complete disagreement with this lay solution of the author (if they are able to appreciate his solution at all). The Custer students, irrespective of their pro or con Custer sentiments, will not be pleased, but will, nevertheless, find themselves fascinated and intrigued with this new approach to the mystery of this highly controverted and disastrous battle. To say the least, Dr. Kulhman has heaped a lot more fuel on a fire which will ever burn among those who love this unsolvable tragedy, but in spite of his efforts what happened there on the Little Big Horn on June 25, 1876, remains as much a legend as it was before his book was written.

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**Trail Driving Days.** Text by Dee Brown; Picture Research by Martin F. Schmitt. (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952. 264 pp., 220 photographs and sketches. \$7.50.)

Dee Brown of the University of Illinois Library staff, and Martin F. Schmitt, Curator of Special Collections at the University of Oregon, here present a spectacular, pictorial chronology of the great Western range cattle days. We heartily agree with their preliminary statement that "no single volume yet has told or probably ever can tell the whole dramatic story of the American cattle trade—"

But **Trail Driving Days** portrays through word and picture the general background, the habits, the dress, the daily life and the amusements and tragedies of the men who pointed longhorn herds up from Texas to the northern rail markets or to the northwestern grazing grounds.

Vigorous writing in this work becomes intensely vivid through the carefully selected and in many instances, rare photographs. This book will delight anyone interested in Western Americana and many who are not.

Texas cattlemen and cowboys necessarily receive a preponderance of attention in the book since much of the cattle history of the West stemmed from that vast area.

Although the author of the text, logically developed first one phase and then another of the trail driving business, there is throughout a leaning toward the sensational. This



is especially true in the portrayal of the Rip-roaring Trail Towns with their dramatic characters such as Wild Bill Hickok, "Bear River" Tom, Billy the Kid, Rowdy Joe Lowe, "Doc" Holliday, and various ladies who followed the red lights along the frontier. But after all, the era of trail driving was a rugged one and the cowboy didn't herd longhorns in a bed of roses.

From the standpoint of those primarily interested in Wyoming's cattle history, it is disappointing not to find the name and photograph of at least one or two of the following: Thomas Sturgis, Alexander Swan, Joseph M. Carey, Francis E. Warren and John B. Kendrick. All of these pioneers began their livestock business with Texas trail herds. And each was a "giant" in his day.

Wyoming, however, does receive considerable attention in **Trail Driving Days** through text and pictures relating to places and persons connected with the Johnson County War. Mr. Brown's account follows closely the well-known versions as told by Asa Mercer and Bill Walker. There still are many unpublished facts which may some day be told.

The book particularly features the work of three pioneer range photographers: L. A. Huffman of Montana, Erwin E. Smith of Texas, and William H. Jackson of Denver. That no more than two photographs by C. D. Kirkland are used is no doubt due to the fact that they were unavailable. Kirkland's early cattle range photographs, however, are among the best ever made in the Wyoming country. The collection of photographs pertaining to Wyoming which Mr. Schmitt assembled are worth the price of the book alone to the person interested in history.

Readers of the Wyoming **Annals** may be interested in knowing that the cut of Longhorns on page 11 in **Trail Driving Days** is a photograph by Stimson of Old Mexico steers owned in 1888 by J. W. Hammond of Cheyenne. The buckskin steer in the center of the group was called Geronimo. According to Mr. Hammond, Geronimo could, with ease, jump out of the highest pole corrals.

Because photography was only in the daguerreotype stage when cowmen were pointing the early herds north from Texas, some of the illustrations for this book necessarily are reproduced drawings made by artists for Frank Leslie's **Illustrated Newspaper** and Joseph G. McCoy's **Historical Sketches of the Cattle Trade** (1874).

Primarily a picture book, **Trail Driving Days** provides much pleasure and entertainment to readers, as well as facts. Those wishing to use it as an authority on Wyo-

ming's cattle industry should check details against source materials, as the following instances, for example, will illustrate: on page 242, it is inferred that the cattlemen employed detectives following the Great Blizzard (1886-87). Ben Morrison, whose photograph is used above the legend, was employed by the Wyoming Stock Growers Association as an inspector or range detective as early as 1879; on page 234, Tom Horn is said to have been "captured by a blue-coated policeman." Actually he was captured and held by a merry-go-round operator named Eldrich until the policeman arrived.

Such trivialities, however, should not detract from the fine performance done by these two sincere, industrious, and talented collaborators who so successfully published **Fighting Indians of The West**, another so-called "picture book."

A glimpse through the carefully selected Bibliography makes this reviewer wish for more time to read and more money to buy volumes such as these about the cattle, horses and men, and the rip-roaring trail towns in the old one-time, free grass country.

AGNES WRIGHT SPRING

Executive Assistant to the President  
State Historical Society of Colorado

**The Great Rascal:** the life and adventures of Ned Buntline. By Jay Monaghan; with illustrations. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1952. 353 pp. illus. bibliog. index. \$4.50.)

Of particular interest to people of this section because of the emphasis on "discovery" and promotion of Buffalo Bill is a new biography of Ned Buntline written by James Monaghan, State Historian of Illinois.

The words "amazing" and "rascal" are well chosen for Ned Buntline. The ordinary law-abiding, conventional reader will gasp over the experiences of this lively little swashbuckler. It seems incredible that anyone could have such energy, such resourcefulness, such brashness as he displayed.

Edward Zane Carroll Judson, later to make famous the pseudonym Ned Buntline, was born to a native American family in New York state, probably in 1823. The influence of his mother seems slight; at least Mr. Monaghan says

little about her contributions to her boy. But his father's characteristics were prominent in the son. To quote, "Ned's father, Levi Carroll Judson, was a writer, an orator . . . , and a man who never made little plans." So it was with the son. Also marked in Ned was his lifetime love for nature and his skill as a fisherman and hunter, developed in his boyhood on a New England farm. Presently friction between father and son drove Ned into running away to join the merchant marine. Later he joined the navy and took part in the Seminole War. The first of his many marriages belonged to that period of his life. So also did his entrance into the field of fiction, with the publication as a pamphlet of an autobiographical short story using for the first time his best-known pseudonym. (He used a dozen others at various times.) He may have followed his navy career by spending some months as a fur trader on the Yellowstone; more likely he invented his sojourn there and borrowed his experiences from real fur trappers. At any rate at the age of twenty Ned had started publishing a monthly literary magazine, one of many periodicals and newspapers he established in various places but failed to make live beyond a few issues. For years he struggled to break into the respectable literary world. That was not to be his claim to fame. But he recognized the hunger of the poor for romance and adventure, and fed them a stream of articles, essays, and stories. However fabulous his life he would not be worthy so detailed a biography were it not for his influence on American literature and his popularization of the West. At a period when the dime novel soared in circulation he contributed hundreds of adventure stories, forerunners of the westerns and comics of more recent times.

At his worst Ned Buntline was a bigamist, a blackmailer, a rioter, a bail jumper, a stimulator of race and religious hatreds in politics, an inveterate liar. Yet Mr. Monaghan manages to make Ned Buntline a far from repellant figure. Perhaps one is fascinated by Ned's activity and industry. Certainly he must have had charm, for he never lacked followers. In his later years he set up and developed an estate near Stamford, New York, a more or less faithful family man, taking a prominent part in community life, even being a member of the school board, writing diligently the while.

As for Mr. Monaghan's manner of presenting the biography—It shows the study of an historian. Bit by bit Mr. Monaghan documents the information he offers, much of it from contemporary newspapers. The narrative is not

easy to follow; even though the footnotes have been relegated to the end of the biography, the location numbers interfere with smooth reading. Ned Buntline skipped around over the country so frequently and became involved in so many unscrupulous dealings that one is confused. The biographer follows his adventures chronologically except for the first two chapters, which relate the Buffalo Bill incidents. Because a great deal of background is given, literary and political, this biography might almost be called a social study. In fact one sees Ned Buntline as a social manifestation rather than as a man. Other members of Ned's family are hazy; one would wish to know more about Ned's mother and sister and wives, and their influence on him.

The most amusing parts of the biography—and it is an entertaining one—are the long quotations from Ned's books. They are almost as astonishing as the man himself. The book jacket provides an apt description of the biography: "The Great Rascal, the exploits of the amazing Ned Buntline, king of the dime novelists, Buffalo Bill's promoter, soldier, sportsman, western trader, roue, political manipulator, adventurer extraordinary." One might repeat that word "extraordinary."

ROSE MARY MALONE

Natrona County High School Library

**Joe Meek, The Merry Mountain Man; A Biography.** By Stanley Vestal. (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1952. xi+336 pp. \$5.00.)

Joe Meek would have been a conspicuous personality in any environment, but as a trapper in the Rockies he was in his natural element. He had physical courage in such abundance that he went out of his way to fight grizzlies and he may have done the same with the Blackfeet. Meek had the stamina to travel for days with little or no food and the dislike of prosaic toil that allowed him to sit around for weeks doing nothing more than eating and swapping yarns—an activity in which he had few peers.

After Joe Meek had settled in Oregon his aversion to hard work attained such proportions that he would do almost anything to get out of plowing a field. Fortunately, Virginia, his Nez Perce wife, did not mind farm work, thereby leaving Joe free to roam around the countryside, visit-

ing with everyone, in his various capacities of tax collector, bill collector, census taker, and marshal. The last office came about as a result of Meek's epic journey overland in the winter of 1847-48 to St. Louis, and then to Washington, with the urgent petition to congress, and his account of the tragedy at Wailatpui. Helen Mar, Meek's daughter, was one of the victims in the Whitman Massacre, thus it is not surprising that every time Joe told strangers of the event he made a profound impression.

Stanley Vestal has touched only lightly on the main features of the journey to, and the activities in Washington of the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Oregon to the court of the United States, as Meek described himself with his usual modesty. This was by far Meek's outstanding accomplishment and it required the exercise of all his peculiar talents, not to mention the use of far more good judgment than he has generally been credited with possessing. This episode, particularly Meek's activities in Washington, deserves more thorough research.

Since there were more Indian battles, and the mountains were never more crowded with picturesque fur traders, than during Meek's eleven years in the Rockies, it is not surprising that Vestal concentrated on those exciting years. However, Meek's part in the Provisional and Territorial governments of Oregon was of such prominence that those activities seem to warrant more than seven of the book's thirty-five chapters. While this may seem a defect to those concerned with the broad panorama of western history, it increases the appeal of the book to those desirous solely of attaining an understanding of Wyoming fur trapping history in the 1830's. In fact, this is an excellent volume to start such a study, as in picturesque language, it lays out the major developments during those years.

Joe Meek spent a great deal of time in what is now the state of Wyoming and in the process trapped beaver on almost every important stream. It is difficult today to comprehend that despite the ease with which one travels by car, there are not too many residents of the state who have seen as much of Wyoming streams as Meek and his trapper friends had by 1840, when the price of beaver fell so low as to make trapping unprofitable on the grand scale it had been conducted during the previous fifteen years.

Walter Campbell, Professor of Journalism at the University of Oklahoma, writes under the pen name of Stanley Vestal. He has long been interested in the Mountain Men

and has written several volumes on them including books on Kit Carson and Jim Bridger, contemporaries of Joe Meek. This is one of Vestal's best books, as Meek's flamboyant career and "hell for leather" philosophy of life are admirably suited to the author's style of writing that rarely slows down to a gallop.

BURTON HARRIS

Hackensack, New Jersey  
Author: John Colter (1952)

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